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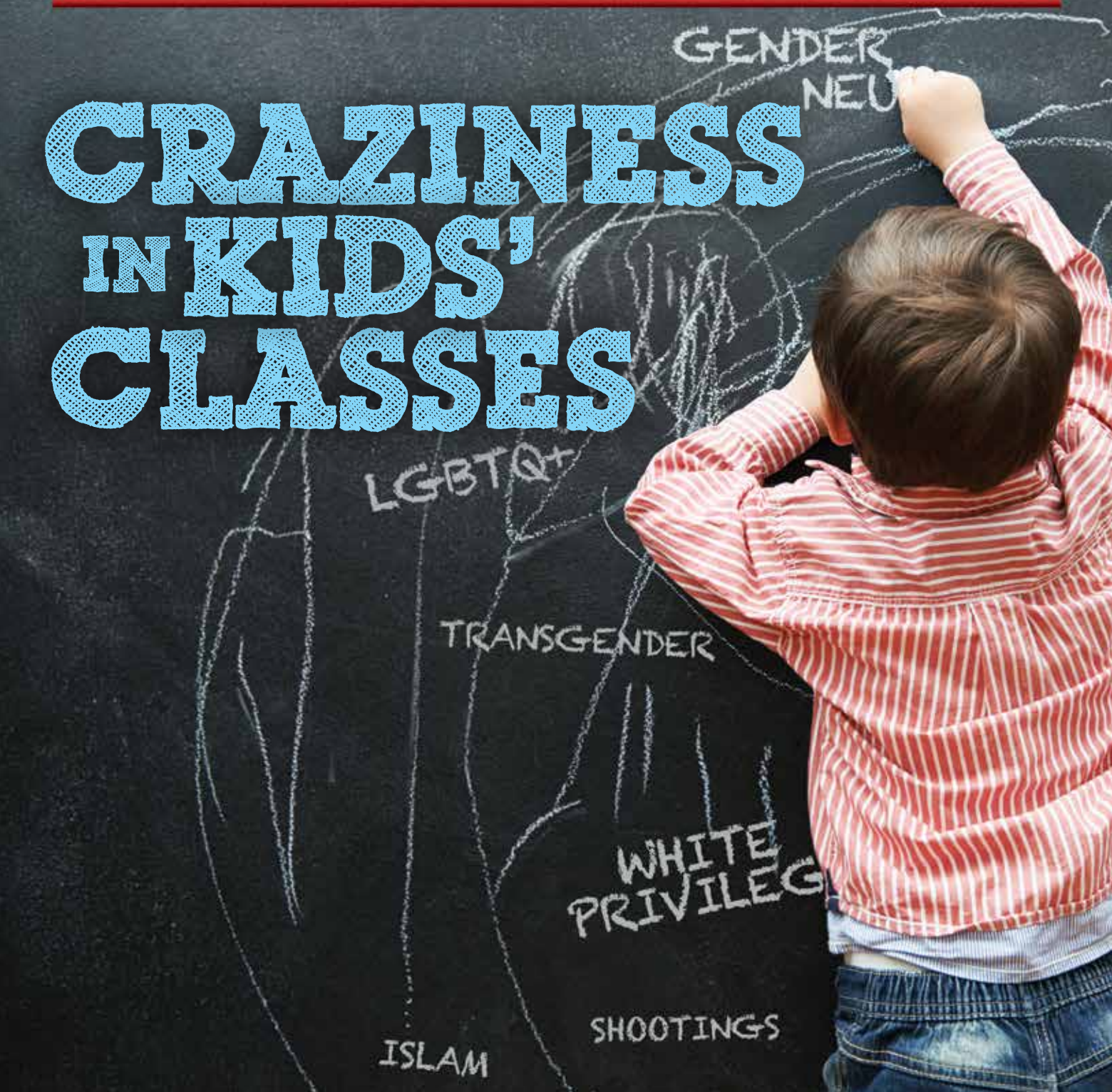

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Deep State: Pulling Strings From Behind the Scenes

After the election of Donald Trump, many Americans noticed the concerted efforts by intelligence agencies, government bureaucrats, rich elites, and major media to vilify Trump and stop his agenda — for the first time noticing the Deep State. (January 8, 2018, 48pp) **TNA180108**

Guilty Until Proven Innocent

Americans have long prided ourselves on creating a government that serves the people, not oppresses them. We were "innocent until proven guilty" in a court of law. That entire ideal is now being overturned. (March 19, 2018, 48pp) **TNA180319**

California Burning: Global Warming or Federal Mismanagement?

With large sections of California — including many houses — going up in flames this past year, many prominent people, have blamed global warming for the fires. But the evidence — strongly —points elsewhere. (February 5, 2018, 48pp) **TNA180205**

Craziness in Kids' Classes

Many parents are oblivious to the fact that public schools are giving up on education's three R's in exchange for almost literal brainwashing in favor of leftist causes: "gay rights," multiple genders, atheism, etc. (April 9, 2018, 48pp) **TNA180409**

Monopoly: Fears, Fallacies, and Facts

Probably every high-school student in America has heard that Theodore Roosevelt busted monopolies that harmed Americans. That is just one fiction upended in this article. (March 5, 2018, 48pp) **TNA180305**

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The New American

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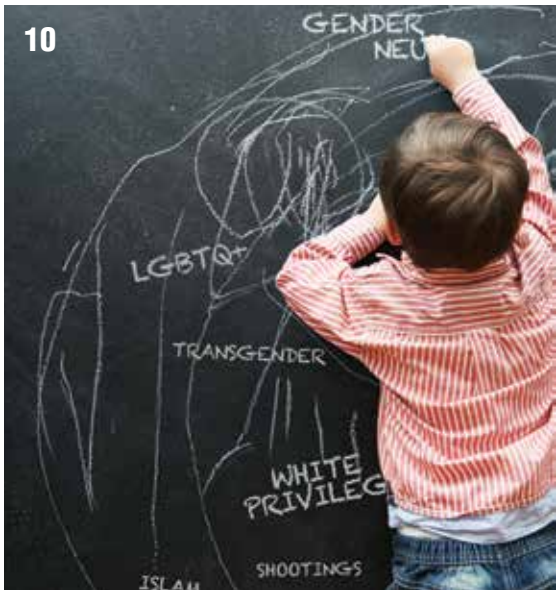

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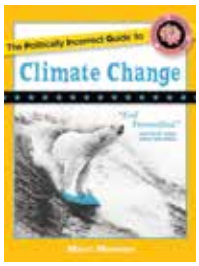

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AP's Fake News

Your article "Unnoteworthy News" about fake news (February 19 issue) really hit home with me, as I have witnessed it firsthand. But in your article, you failed to mention, arguably, the largest and worst agency for fake/biased political reporting, the Associated Press. In 2016, during the first presidential debate, I had occasion to discover just how biased this mainstream news service had become. Up to that time, I had always felt that when I read a newspaper article that contained the AP designation, it could be relied on to be factual. I could not believe that such a major news service would risk its reputation to slant its coverage. Then I watched the presidential debate on TV and read the AP accounts in the papers the next day. It was like two completely different events. The AP tried to make readers believe that then-candidate Trump had no respect for the military, when the opposite was the truth. For me, that was the end of allowing left-wing journalists to influence my opinion.

Ken Leifheit
Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin

For Trump and Tariffs

Thank you, President Trump, for finally standing up for America and its workers and proposing tariffs on imported steel and aluminum. America is by far the largest economy in the world, and it has every right to reciprocate against negative policies from foreign countries — true freedom to trade where and how we want and not get into harmful foreign entanglements disguised as trade agreements.

Globalists and their cronies are squealing like stuck pigs because their hidden agenda is to promote a New World Order — world government — under the hidden agenda shield of trade agreements, and they are being unveiled and hopefully neutralized by a president elected by people who truly want to put America First.

We have already lost hundreds of thousands of our best-paying manufacturing jobs because of these trading policies, and our service jobs, which account for four out of five jobs in America, are targeted by globalist vested interests.

Jim King
Rialto, California

Attack the Minimum Wage

Let's attack minimum wages this way: Our courts have long protected citizens by outlawing or restricting dangerous products and practices.

Under much-higher minimum wages, can unemployed youth join job competition? Are they able to? Not well.

Will employers attempt the gamble of hiring overpaid, inexperienced, poorly educated job seekers among a plethora of choices? Why take the risk? Laying off the unqualified youth might even offend some random bureaucrat with authority to stop it!

Price control is an outdated, evil, socialist idea. Minimum wage *is* price control! Socialist Scandinavia is surprising the rest of the world — me included — by rejecting it! U.S. unemployment and minimum wages are wedded in an unholy union. How long will young Americans have to suffer the consequences?

Gunnar Unneland
Shoreline, Washington

Hardly That Harrison

In The New American article entitled "John Foster Dulles: How This early 'Deep-Stater' Harmed America" (March 5 issue), it states: "The Harrison administration [meaning William Harrison] ended before it could act on the new government's request for annexation (the next president, Grover Cleveland, quickly nixed the idea)."

William Harrison was the ninth president of the United States. The next president was John Tyler, not Grover Cleveland, who was the 22nd and 24th president.

Ha, Ha! You can't fool me. I have all the presidents memorized.

Wallace Hoffman
Sent via e-mail

The author responds: *I am sorry about that mistake. I can recite the presidents in order, and I certainly meant Benjamin Harrison, the grandson of William Henry Harrison. — Steve Byas*

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Census Bureau Forecasts Older Americans Will Outnumber Children

supersizer/E+/Getty Images

The U.S. Census Bureau released data from its 2017 National Population Projections on March 13 revealing an important demographic turning point in U.S. history. The report noted that by 2030, all Baby Boomers will be older than age 65. This will increase the size of the older population such that one in every five U.S. residents will be of retirement age.

"The aging of Baby Boomers means that within just a couple decades, older people are projected to outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history," the release said, quoting Jonathan Vespa, a demographer with the U.S. Census Bureau. "By 2035, there will be 78.0 million people 65 years and older compared to 76.4 million under the age of 18."

The Census Bureau's projections indicated that the 2030s will be a "transformative" decade for the U.S. population in several respects. Notably, the population is expected to grow at a slower pace, age considerably, and become more racially and ethnically diverse.

The major source of population growth is also expected to shift. What the bureau describes as net international migration (as a result of immigration) is projected to overtake natural increase in 2030 as the primary source of population growth in the United States. The report said this is another demographic first for the United States.

A predictable outcome of having several generations with high birth rates followed by succeeding generations with low birth rates is that, eventually, there will be smaller numbers of workers paying into the Social Security system, just as the number of retirees is very high.

If one conclusion can be made from this latest census study, it is that the influential abortion and contraception lobby that has contributed to America's declining birth rate for the past 55 years will inevitably change the demographic makeup of our nation in the future. Much has been written about the morality of the contraceptive culture, but that culture will have economic consequences, as well.

Chinese Communist Party Influence on U.S. College Campuses

In true communist fashion, the Chinese government is using dishonest and underhanded tactics — and lots of money — to influence both perception and public policy in the United States. One of China's favorite tactics is using Chinese student groups known as Chinese Students and Scholars Associations (CSSAs) to do the bidding of the communist government.

In a March 7 report, *Foreign Policy* exposed the ways the Chinese government funds student groups and directs their actions. It cites several examples, based on messages and records reviewed by *Foreign Policy*, as well as interviews with Chinese students, who "requested anonymity for fear of potential reprisals."

One of the examples cited in the article is of Chinese President Xi Jinping's September 24, 2015 visit to the United States. Xi visited business and tech leaders in and around Seattle, Washington, before heading to a state dinner with President Obama at the White House. But those were not the only honors shown to Xi during his visit. As the article explains, "When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Washington on Sept. 24, 2015 on a state visit, hundreds of Chinese students lined the streets for hours, carrying banners and flags to welcome him." Each of those students was paid $20 for lining the streets, waiving prepared banners and flags, and praising the communist leader.

This practice is widespread and routine. The article says that "CSSAs regularly accept funds from their local consulates and many officially describe themselves as under the 'guidance' or 'leadership' of the embassy."

A good example of that can be seen in what happens when a Chinese student refuses to praise the communist government. In May 2017, Shuping Yang, a graduating student at the University of Maryland, gave a commencement speech using the comparison between the air quality in the United States to that in China as a metaphor for the difference between freedom and tyranny. Yang was immediately attacked by the local CSSA, which accused her of spreading "false statements and rumor." When the video of her speech went viral, they posted their own video denouncing Yang.

AP Images

Wyoming Law Removes Penalty For Using Gold and Silver

filo/E+/Getty Images Plus

The Wyoming state legislature has passed by large majorities a bill that will remove tax penalties from people who choose to use gold and silver specie as a currency of exchange.

The Wyoming Legal Tender Act restores sound money in Wyoming, and on March 14, the bill became law without Governor Matt Mead's signature.

Campaign for Liberty Chairman Ron Paul and Wyoming Campaign for Liberty State Coordinator Cathy Ide issued the following statements regarding the Wyoming Legislature's passage of HB 103:

"Many thanks go to our bill sponsor, Representative Roy Edwards. His hard work on HB 103 and that of our dedicated grassroots supporters, led to an astounding 55-5 favorable House vote and 25-5 Senate vote," said Ide. "As a result, Wyoming citizens will no longer be punished with any taxes simply for choosing to use gold as money, as laid out by the U.S. Constitution."

"Passage of the Wyoming Legal Tender Act is the latest sign that dissatisfaction with the Federal Reserve's money monopoly — and the movement to change our fiat currency system led by my Campaign for Liberty — is alive and growing," Paul wrote in a press release announcing the official enactment of the measure.

In plain English, this provides a way for men and women of Wyoming to buy and sell gold and silver without having to treat it as a capital gain, thus reducing the reach of the Federal Reserve inside the state of Wyoming.

Before passage of the Wyoming Legal Tender Act, the laws of that state required that all debts be paid in Federal Reserve notes or in coins issued by the government of the United States. This is in direct contradiction to Article I, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution, which reads, "No State shall … make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts."

Wyoming is headed in the right direction with the enactment of its Legal Tender Act. Other states, Ron Paul believes, will soon follow.

Anti-gun Hollywood Turning Off Americans

A poll conducted by Zogby Analytics during the last week of February showed how the combination of hypocrisy and real-world facts are negating Hollywood's anti-gun message. When 869 likely voters were asked by Zogby, "When Hollywood actors and actresses speak out about gun control, does that make you want to support or oppose our constitutional right to bear arms (the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution)?", the response across every class, age group, and political party affiliation indicated that Hollywood's anti-gun message is being increasingly rejected. Taken altogether, 56 percent of those polled said Hollywood's anti-gun rants make them want either to "somewhat" support or "strongly support" the Second Amendment. Just 28 percent reflect the bias pitched by Hollywood, with 16 percent "strongly opposed" to the right guaranteed by the Second Amendment in the Constitution's Bill of Rights, and 12 percent "somewhat opposed."

Surprisingly, support for the Second Amendment was strongest among millennials: "Among all age groups surveyed, supporting the Second Amendment was strongest among Millennials age 18-29 (65% support). A majority of all other age groups were also more likely to support the Second Amendment rather than oppose it when Hollywood talks about gun control."

When it came to political party, equal percentages of Democrats and Independents (47 percent) support the Second Amendment, while Republicans were nearly off the charts at 86-percent support.

rodolfo_salgado/ iStock Editorial / Getty Images Plus

This could be especially dicey for Democrats in November: "As we approach the November midterms, gun control will be a hot button issue but, according to [our] data, Hollywood interjecting itself into the debate makes even the Democratic base want to bear arms."

The more the Left pushes its anti-gun, anti-Second Amendment meme, the more Americans are waking up to the fact that they are being played for fools. As the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action expressed it: "According to the Zogby poll … all these efforts have actually done a great service to the Second Amendment.... Hooray for Hollywood lecturing the rest of the country on the evils of firearms!"

Social Media Purges of Conservatives and Christians Spark Outcry

bigtunaonline/ iStock Editorial / Getty Images Plus

With social-media giants becoming increasingly hostile to anyone who disagrees with statist and globalist ideology, a growing chorus of voices is sounding the alarm. Christians, conservatives, libertarians, patriots, and more have all been purged from key platforms. On Capitol Hill and across America, outrage over the politically motivated "censorship" is escalating. Now, with lawsuits flying and calls for regulation getting louder, a number of legal issues confront the Internet behemoths — Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, and more — that could lead to dramatic changes in the years ahead.

Some critics of the social-media purges are hoping government will step in. Noting that the feds have been intimately involved in the development of social media from the start, more than a few prominent voices want Congress to approve an "Internet Bill of Rights." The measure would basically extend protections enshrined in the First and Fourth amendments to the online world. Other critics are hoping the federal government will use anti-trust statutes to crack down on Internet "monopolies," potentially breaking them up and introducing more competition.

Social-media companies involved in the effort to cleanse the Internet of "thought crimes" have tried to downplay concerns, pretending that it has nothing to do with politics. Twitter, for instance, released a statement claiming its censorship regime is not political. "We enforce our rules without political bias," the company claimed, even as a growing barrage of lawsuits claims otherwise. Based on recent developments, Twitter's claim rings hollow, purge victims say. YouTube has even partnered with the far-left Southern Poverty Law Center, widely described as an anti-Christian hate group, to censor video content.

The unprecedented crackdown on conservative and Christian speech has ensnared some of the most powerful and influential voices in American media, including conservative talk-radio titan Alex Jones and his Infowars media empire. Other targets of the recent purges include "Health Ranger" Mike Adams of Natural News, an enormously influential service focusing on natural health. Also caught up has been Prager University, a nonprofit education service that has attracted a massive following. A number of popular YouTube channels were taken down for allegedly promoting "conspiracy theories." Facebook even censored popular Christian evangelist Julio Severo for posting a well-known Bible verse, which the company deemed "hate speech" before reversing its decision in the wake of an international outcry.

In response to the purges, a number of prominent voices are calling for an all-hands-on-deck effort to fight back. And some top lawmakers are taking note. At a January 17 Senate hearing, Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) began by asking representatives of the Internet giants — Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube — whether they consider themselves to be "neutral" in providing a forum for public discussion. All of them answered yes.

"The pattern of political censorship we are seeing across the technology companies is highly concerning," Senator Cruz said in his closing remarks. "And the opening question I asked of whether you are a neutral public forum — if you are a neutral public forum, that does not allow for political editorializing and censorship. And if you are not a neutral public forum, the entire predicate for liability immunity under the CDA [Communications Decency Act] is claiming to be a neutral public forum, so you cannot have it both ways."

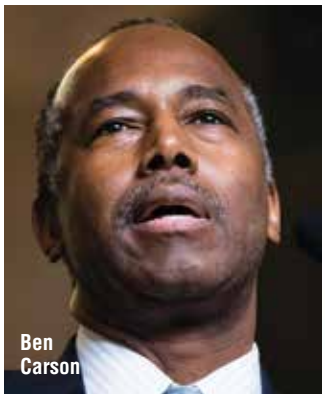
According to various sources, Infowars is preparing to unveil an alternative to YouTube very soon. The goal is to make the establishment-controlled video platform obsolete. At the same time, with Facebook facing a crisis as users spend less and less time on the manipulative platform, a number of new social-media firms are popping up, hoping to become an alternative to the establishment-run giants that received government backing and continue to partner with government.

Some of the lawsuits and regulatory efforts targeting the purges by Internet giants may succeed. But as the establishment's propaganda becomes increasingly obvious and outlandish, truth-seeking people will continue seeking out the facts that the establishment wants hidden. Already, the election of Trump has exposed the establishment media as fringe, and far-less powerful than commonly believed. If the social-media companies keep it up, they, too, may end up destroying their own businesses. Preserving the free market and the First Amendment will be key. Regardless of what happens, though, the growing hunger for truth is not going away — and as long as a market for truth exists, the truth will be supplied. ■

HUD Secretary Finds Leading the Department Incredibly Difficult

"There are more complexities here than in brain surgery. Doing this job is going to be a very intricate process."

A former brain surgeon, Dr. **Ben Carson** *considers his new post as the leader of the $47 billion per year bureaucracy far more difficult than his previous position.*


Ben Carson

AP Images

Russian TV Host Issues Threat to "Traitors" After an Attack on a Defector

"Being a traitor is one of the most dangerous professions in the world. Alcoholism, drugs, stress, nervous breakdowns and depression are inevitable illnesses of a traitor. As a consequence — heart attacks, strokes, traffic accidents, or suicide ultimately [follow]."

While in Britain, former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter suffered dire effects of a nerve gas attack. During a broadcast on Russia's government-controlled Channel One, commentator **Kirill Kleimenov** *issued what seemed to be a warning that no one should seek to betray Vladimir Putin or his rule of the country.*

Former Al-Qaeda Terrorist Cooperates but Isn't Accepted in Witness Protection Program

"I helped them [U.S. forces] kill my friends [al-Qaeda]. If that doesn't show how you're willing to turn your life around, I don't know what will."

An American, **Bryant Vinas** *joined al-Qaeda in Pakistan for training and, for a time, worked for the terrorist group in Afghanistan. Arrested by Pakistani police, he was flown back to the United States, where he had a change of heart and started cooperating with U.S. authorities. A federal judge and several FBI agents recommended in vain that he be placed in the witness protection program, which he wants.*

Mick Mulvaney

AP Images

Was he serious? Or was he joking?

"As a right-wing conservative and founding member of the Freedom Caucus, I never expected that the co-worker I would work closest, and best, with at the White House would be a 'globalist.' Gary Cohn is one of the smartest people I've ever worked with. Having the chance to collaborate with him will remain one of the highlights of my career in public service."

When Gary Cohn resigned, Director of Management and Budget **Mick Mulvaney**, *who is not considered a globalist by anyone, tweeted the above message.*

Illegal Immigration Foe Counters Sympathy for Targeted Illegals

"Look, when families are broken up, it's not a great situation. But it's not our problem. These [illegal] immigrants are adults; they have to be responsible for their actions. Kids sometimes suffer from the bad decisions their parents make. If Mom and Dad stop paying their mortgage and get evicted, the kids don't get to stay in the house."

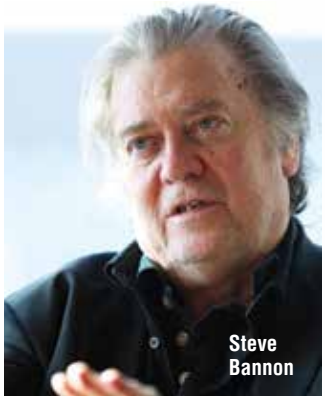
The executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, **Kirk Krikorian** *insists that illegal immigrants have broken U.S. law and should be punished.*

Former Strategist for President Trump Cheers French Foes of Immigration

"The central government is debasing your citizenship and the big capitalists are debasing your personhood. Let them call you racists. Let them call you xenophobes. Let them call you nativists. Wear [these] charges as a badge of honor."

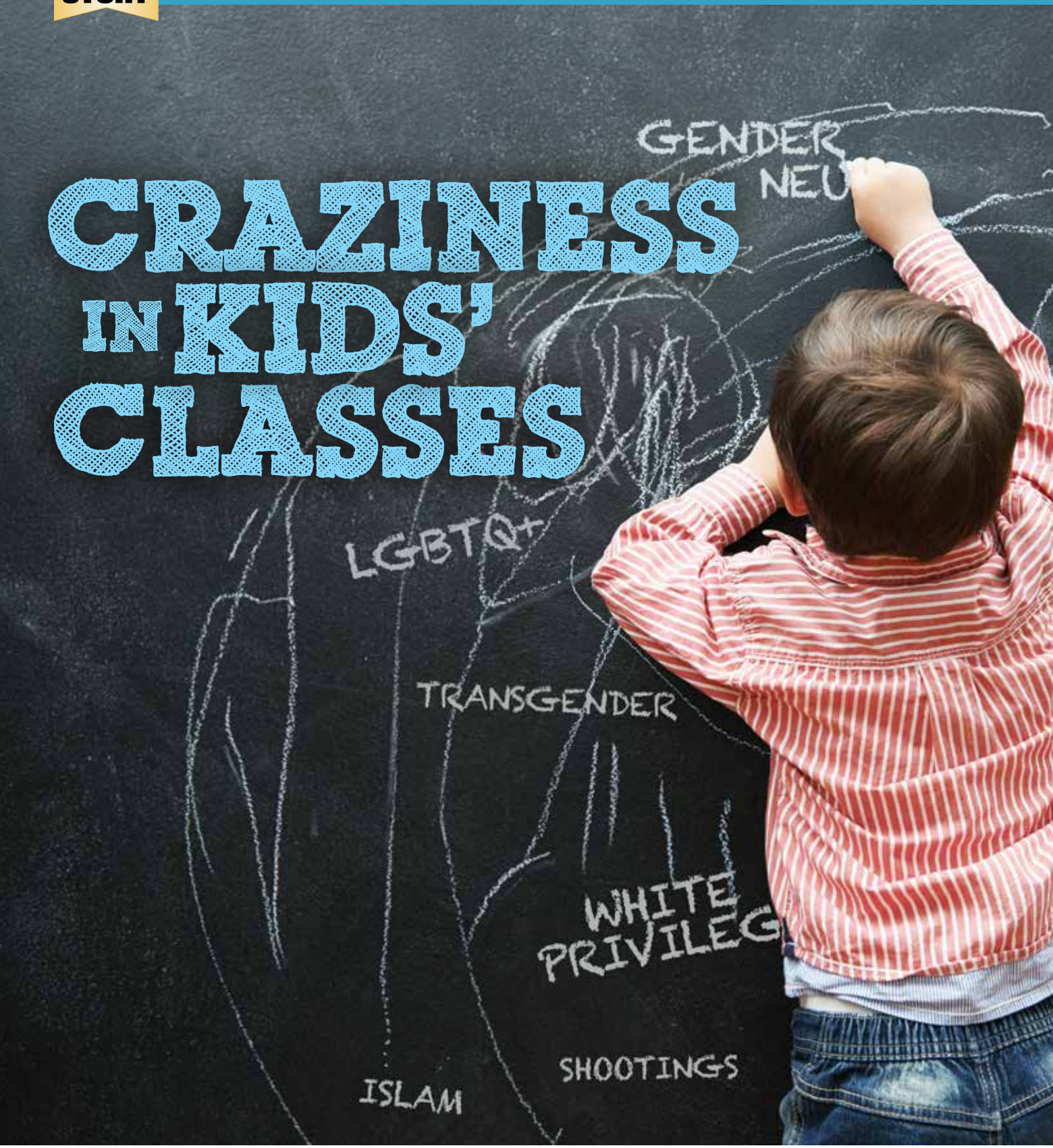
During his visit to France, **Steve Bannon** *delivered a fiery speech to the anti-immigration National Front led by Marine Le Pen.* ■

— Compiled by John F. McManus


Steve Bannon

AP Images

CRAZINESS IN KIDS' CLASSES



Parents who went to public schools decades ago likely assume their children are receiving the same types of lessons and instruction that they did. They couldn't be more wrong.

by Selwyn Duke

If the "philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next," as the apocryphal saying goes, then today's Blackboard Jungle could lead us to a true dark age. This may seem an extreme statement to those whose public-school days are decades past. But just as entertainment has changed radically over that time period, with cultural effluent streaming out of Hollywood and leftist and libertine messages streaming into children's minds, so has education — and just as much. In fact, what transpires in government schools today is so bizarre that sometimes you'd be inclined to say "You can't make this stuff up" — except that someone did.

In fact, what transpires in government schools today is so bizarre that sometimes you'd be inclined to say "You can't make this stuff up" — except that someone did.

It's appropriate to begin this exposition with a school policy that might have helped create a nation-shaking event: the Parkland, Florida, school shooting. The Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) was called to the home of the killer (as is my habit, I won't use his name and provide him publicity) perhaps as many as 45 times during the past decade; additionally, the BSO received a warning that he "could be a school shooter in the making." There were also warnings sent to the FBI. Yet while "South Florida police detectives have arrested a slew of young men in unrelated cases who exhibited similar, troubling behavior on a variety of charges," taking "them seriously," wrote the *Miami Herald* February 23, it "never happened with [the Florida shooter]." The reason why might not have just been garden-variety incompetence, either.

In 2010, I reported on the Barack Obama administration's $4.3-billion "Race to the Top" initiative, which involved an effort to reduce the suspension and expulsion rates of black and Hispanic students. In other words, the goal was to assign punishment based on quota. This was embraced by various school systems, such as that of Minneapolis, Minnesota, but was also likely inspired by one: Broward County's.

As *Breitbart* reported February 26, "The Broward County school district's adoption of a school discipline policy that was praised by the Obama administration for seeking to reduce the reported number of school suspensions, expulsions, and arrests may have played a role in the fact that [the Parkland killer] remained under the radar until his shooting rampage in Parkland, Florida, on February 14." The social-engineering goal was to address the "school-to-prison pipeline" that, as the Obama administration's theory goes, discriminates against minority and low-income students. Of course, following this logic, we could also say that the pipeline "discriminates" against boys — if obscuring the fact that boys commit more violent crimes than girls do were a priority (interestingly, the Left makes no effort whatsoever to muddy the waters on this disparity). *Breitbart* then quoted Manhattan Institute senior fellow Max Eden, who said that the Broward schools "decided to reduce police involvement by not bringing in cops to arrest kids for a whole range of serious offenses, and then, as you would expect, the arrests go down when you stop arresting." In Broward this was known as the "PROMISE" program. But how does this relate to the BSO's failure to arrest the Parkland killer at his home?

As *American Thinker's* Jack Cashill related February 26, quoting an old Associated Press article, "One of the nation's largest school districts has reached an agreement with law enforcement agencies and the NAACP to reduce the number of students being charged with crimes for minor offenses." By now you can guess what school district and law-enforcement agency are being referenced. Cashill also informed, "It is not hard to understand why Broward County officials would be eager to adopt this program. Miami-Dade had been receiving all kinds of honors for its efforts to shut down the dread[ed] 'school-to-prison'

AP Images

The color of accountability: Obama's "Race to the Top" education initiative was really a race to the bottom. It encouraged the practice of punishing students based on racial quotas, a perversion of justice that might have made the Parkland shooting possible.

To explain non-Asian minorities' relatively poor academic achievement, Edina blamed "institutional racial bias" and one of the latest imaginary boogeymen, "white privilege."

pipeline. On February 15, 2012, Miami-Dade County Public Schools put out a press release citing a commendation the Miami-Dade Schools Police (M-DSPD) had recently received." Of course, you get more of what is rewarded — including criminal-enabling kid-glove justice.

Cashill points out that because the PROMISE program encompassed all "marginalized minorities," the Parkland killer's Hispanic last name caused him to fit the "metrics" of the collaborative school-police agreement, "regardless of his DNA."

The last part of this story involves Scot Peterson, the BSO deputy labeled a coward for not entering Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and attempting to stop the shooting. As Cashill writes, "What Broward County authorities did know is that the best 'school resource officers,' the euphemism for in-school sheriff's deputies, were those most sensitive to the objectives of the PROMISE program. It is hardly shocking that in 2014, the now-notorious Scot Peterson was named School Resource Officer of the Year by the Broward County Crime Commission for handling issues 'with tact and judgment.'" Cashill later quotes the *Miami Herald* and relates that in 2015, "A deputy investigated a report that [the Parkland killer] 'planned to shoot up the school' — intelligence that was forwarded to the school's resource officer, with no apparent result."

"That school resource officer just happened to be Scot Peterson," Cashill continued. "He did not err by letting this misunderstood Hispanic lad go unpunished in any meaningful way. Peterson showed his award-winning 'tact and judgment.' He had to understand that to keep the PROMISE momentum going, the school would have to see fewer and fewer arrests each year."

BananaStock / Getty Images Plus

The race to instill racialism: Unbelievably, teachers in Edina, Minnesota, have K-2 students participate in the "Melanin Project," which encourages them to focus on race for the ostensible purpose of eliminating bigotry. One exercise has the children trace their hands and color them the pigment of their own skin.

Of course, the lesson here isn't that sending a child to a government school places him in the cross hairs of mass shooters; they are rare, and more American children are killed each year in pool drownings or bicycle accidents. It's this: Do you really want your child attending an institution at which on-site police are needed and which, especially in liberal jurisdictions, malefactors will be roaming free nonetheless because of criminal coddling masquerading as "tact and judgment"?

Moving on from the rare to the everywhere (in schools) brings us to the soul slaughter, the mind molestation, perpetrated by the malefactors known as educators. A prime example is the Edina school system, which was once the pride and joy of Minnesota — until it exchanged that pride for prejudice. Now, wrote the *Weekly Standard* February 1, "Academic rigor is unraveling, high school reading and math test scores are sliding, and students increasingly fear bullying and persecution." What happened in this wealthy Minneapolis suburb? In 2013, school officials launched a full court press to achieve "racial equity," a euphemistic cover for hardcore leftist social engineering.

To explain non-Asian minorities' relatively poor academic achievement, Edina blamed "institutional racial bias" and one of the latest imaginary boogeymen, "white privilege." This isn't unusual today, but Edina has taken the philosophy to new extremes with a racial-identity-politics program called "All for All." The *Weekly Standard* provided some shocking details:

The Edina school district's All for All plan mandated that henceforth "all teaching and learning experiences" would be viewed through the "lens of racial equity," and that only "racially conscious" teachers and administrators should be hired.

District leaders assured parents this would reduce Edina's racial achievement gap, which they attributed to "barriers rooted in racial constructs and cultural misunderstandings."

As a result, the school system's obsession with "white privilege" now begins in kindergarten. At Edina's Highlands Elementary School, for example, K-2 students participate in the Melanin Project. The children trace their hands, color them to reflect their skin tone, and place the cut-outs on a poster reading, "Stop thinking your skin color is better than anyone elses [sic]! — Everyone is special!"

Highlands Elementary's new "racially conscious" elementary school principal runs a blog for the school's community. On it, she approvingly posted pictures of Black Lives Matter propaganda and rainbow gay-pride flags — along with a picture of protesters holding a banner proclaiming "Gay Marriage Is Our Right." On a more age-appropriate post, she recommended an A-B-C book for small children entitled *A is for Activist*. (Peruse the book and you find all sorts of solid-gold: "F is for Feminist," "C is for…Creative Counter to Corporate Vultures," and "T is for Trans.")

At Edina High School, the equity agenda is the leading edge of a full-scale ideological reeducation campaign. A course description of an 11th-grade U.S. Literature and Composition course puts it this way: "By the end of the year, you will have ... learned how to apply marxist [sic], feminist, post-colonial [and] psychoanalytical ... lenses to literature."

The *Standard* reports that at the "Rate My Teachers" website, one student characterized a mandatory year-long English course thus: "This class should be renamed ... 'Why white males are bad, and how oppressive they are.'" Not surprisingly, like Joseph Stalin having dissenters airbrushed from history books, this review was later deleted. Speaking of books, one student reported an English teacher as having said that classic literature wouldn't be taught in class because "dead white men are boring."

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From math to manipulation: Schools once taught what can bind us together and applies to all, the objective. Now group-identity politics has led to group-identity curricula, with the notion that traditional teaching reflects "white supremacy." Oh, the three R's are still emphasized, but now they're racism, revisionism, and relativism.

And those who complained were dead to the educators. The *Standard* related stories of students being harangued by teachers for disagreeing with the school-state ideology. Most egregious, perhaps, was the plight of the Edina High School's unofficial Young Conservatives Club (YCC). After complaining on social media about a 2017 protest at a Veteran's Day assembly, during which leftist ne'er-do-wells showed great disrespect toward the national anthem and "Taps," they were threatened on YouTube and harassed daily by large groups of fellow students who surrounded them and used threats of physical harm to coerce them into changing their beliefs. The school's response was to disband the YCC and brush off its members' security concerns, "saying that [they had] brought it upon themselves by criticizing the protests," according to a legal complaint. Meanwhile, the leftist harassers escaped discipline. The conservative students have filed a federal lawsuit against the district for violating their rights of free speech and association.

As for classic literature being purged, Edina isn't alone — and, apparently, dead white women are boring, too. After all, Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, along with *Huckleberry Finn*, has been dropped from the curriculum in Duluth, Minnesota, schools. It's part of "an effort to be considerate of all students," wrote the *Star Tribune* in February, as the books "contain racial slurs." In case you're wondering, the problem is a particular slur, the one disgorged continually in rap songs and by black youths in everyday banter.

Of course, being "considerate of all students," or being "sensitive" or "inoffensive" (whatever the excuse *du jour* is), is merely leftist pretext for purging tradition. Such claims presuppose that you can please all of the people all of the time, which here is impossible because most everyone is offended by something and most everything offends someone. It's always just a matter of choosing whom you're going to offend; leftists choose traditionalists.

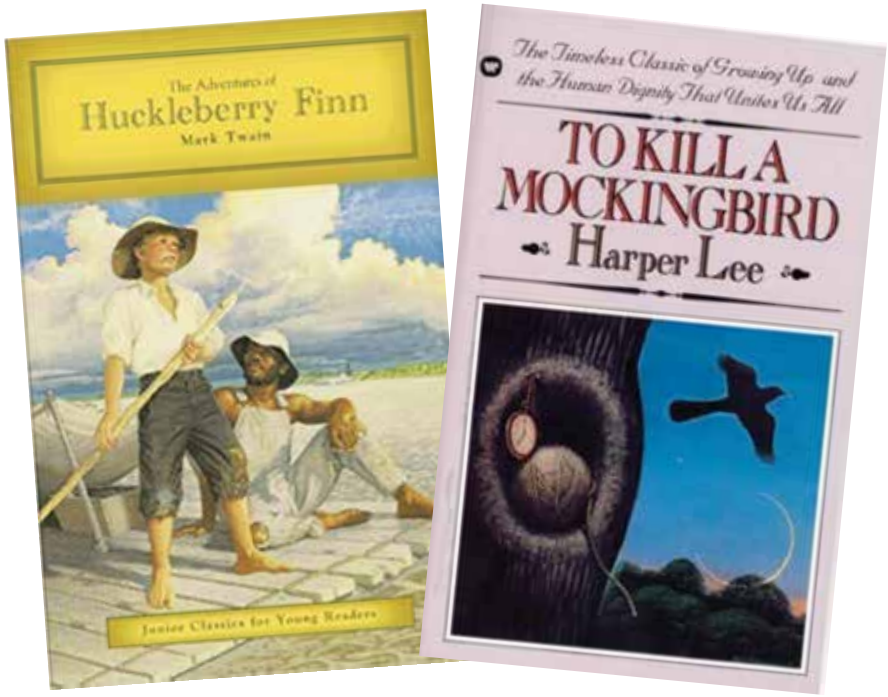
Another removal of *To Kill a Mockingbird* from curriculum occurred last year in Biloxi, Mississippi — and the locality was just joining the club. As the *Duluth News Tribune* reported in February, "The American Library Association listed the book as the 21st most banned or challenged book from 2000 to 2009, with 'Huckleberry Finn' topping it as the 14th most banned or challenged book in that decade." Interestingly, there is a good reason to remove *To Kill a Mockingbird* from curricula: It's a modern book — one of many which (*The*

Catcher in the Rye also comes to mind) supplanted better, more traditional works — and one which reflects and exacerbates our destructive obsession with race and "racism." Of course, today it's being purged for the wrong reasons and will only be replaced with more intensely racially obsessed material.

Then there are the schools that will still teach *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but try to kill sexual morality in the process. In West Bend, Wisconsin, for example, 150 Badger Middle School students who read the work were given a 55-item "privilege test" including questions such as, "I never doubted my parents' acceptance of my sexuality," "I have never tried to hide my sexuality" and "I feel comfortable with the gender I was born in."

This obsession with sex is virtually everywhere. For instance, while classics are being culled, the "California State Board of Education voted Nov. 9 [2017] to approve 10 LGBTQ+-inclusive history textbooks for K-8 students, becoming the first U.S. state to do so," wrote the *Daily Californian* at the time. Even before then, the Obama administration had issued 2016 guidelines stating that "transgender" students — that is to say, those masquerading as members of the opposite sex — should be allowed to use the bathrooms and locker rooms of their choice (e.g., boys in girls' facilities). While this decision was reversed last year by the Trump administration, reversing the thinking of deluded and dangerous local officials isn't so easy. Just consider a recent report about Delaware's proposed "Regulation 225," which would let state students "as young as 5 choose their own race and gender-identity — without approval from their parents," reported Fox News February 20. Schools would also "be required to provide access to facilities and activities that are consistent with a student's gender identity [fantastical self-image] — regardless of the child's sex at birth," Fox also related. "That includes bathrooms, locker rooms, team sports and adhering to the child's preferred name. Under the proposal, students could also choose their own race."

If that sounds nutty, it doesn't have much on the aptly named Amy Ellis Nutt, a sexual revolutionary featured in a pre-Christmas-break, school-wide assembly at a northern Virginia school. As nonprofit lobbying organization The Family Research Council reported in January:



Killing education — and poor Huck: Mark Twain's and Harper Lee's famous novels have been banished from some curricula mainly because they contain a certain racial slur — the same one found in rap songs off which record producers make millions of dollars. Interestingly, while adolescents' supposedly virginal eyes mustn't gaze upon such trauma-inducing terms, the very same educators may ram the LGBTQ+ agenda and graphic sex education down the kids' throats.

> George Mason High School in the City of Falls Church brought in Nutt, a *Washington Post* reporter, to lecture students on her book *Becoming Nicole*, about a boy who "identified" as a girl as a toddler, had his puberty suppressed as a child, and was castrated as a teenager.
>
> Nutt's lecture hit all the usual notes. Your gender is "assigned at birth" by people who might get it wrong. Toddlers can be transgender. Moray eels change sex and female reef fish produce sperm when there are no males. "Gender is a spectrum," everyone must get "comfortable" with new gender language that is "changing every day." Asking a biological boy to use the teachers' rather than the girls' restroom is "bullying."

Parents weren't notified of the Nutt talk, mind you, students weren't given the opportunity to opt out, and even some teachers were horrified.

The truth is that government schooling is a spectrum — one ranging from bad to worse. Parents in the Missouri locality of Bourbon learned this the hard way and probably needed a bourbon after discovering that their schools were "distributing surveys to children aged 10 and 11 asking whether they wanted to change genders. The controversial documents also asked the 6th grade students if they thought about suicide, using drugs, engaging in homosexual acts, and more," wrote *The Newman Report* in January.

Then the *New York Post* reported in 2015 that in "October 2014, a school district in Nebraska circulated a handout that suggested teachers avoid 'gendered' expressions, such as 'boys and girls,' in case they alienate transgender students. The instructions, issued by the Lincoln Public Schools system, recommended using gender-neutral expression[s] such as 'Calling all readers,' 'Hey, campers' or something as nonspecific as 'Purple penguins' when telling kids to sit down on the rug for circle time." Of course,

children usually learn to tell the difference between boys and girls at age two; now we have adults who can't tell the difference.

They confuse fact and fiction, too. I've often pointed out that there's no good science behind the "transgender" agenda (I won't elaborate here), that as former "transsexual" Alan Finch put it, "You fundamentally can't change sex.... Transsexualism was invented by psychiatrists." Yet children in government schools are still used as guinea pigs in this experiment. It just bears out what philosopher G.K. Chesterton noted in *What's Wrong With the World* (1910): "The trouble in too many of our modern schools is that the State, being controlled so specially by the few, allows cranks and experiments to go straight to the schoolroom when they have never passed through the Parliament, the public house, the private house, the church, or the marketplace."

Of course, something passing through the church today pretty much guarantees it won't be in educators' narrow marketplace of ideas. Just consider the following outrageous example, from the earlier referenced *New York Post* piece: "It's common for principals to favor 'holiday trees' instead of Christmas trees, but Nichols Elementary in Frisco, Texas, went one step further in December 2013. The colors red and green were banned from the school's Winter Party, and the children were not allowed to make any reference to Christmas or any other religious holiday. One teacher there wanted to add an Elf on the Shelf to her classroom — but decided against it in case she 'got in trouble.'"

Interestingly, though, teachers didn't have this fear at Chatham Middle School in Chatham, New Jersey, despite showing the children Muslim propaganda videos that included an explicit call to convert to Islam. Particularly egregious is a video the children were shown entitled "What is Islam? A brief introduction for Non-Muslims." As I reported in January, just consider the quotations from it below, presented to the students as facts:

• "Allah is the one God who created the heavens and the earth, who has no equal and is all powerful."

• "Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the last and final Messenger of God. God gave him the Noble Quran."

• "Lo, We have sent thee (O Muhammad) with the truth, a bringer of glad tidings and a warner."

• "What is the Noble Quran? Divine Revelation sent to Muhammad (S) last Prophet of Allah. A Perfect guide for Humanity."

• "The Noble Quran: Guidance, Mercy and Blessing for all Mankind."

•"The Noble Quran: Without any doubt and an eloquent guide from Allah."

• "The Beautiful Quran: Guidance for the wise and sensible."

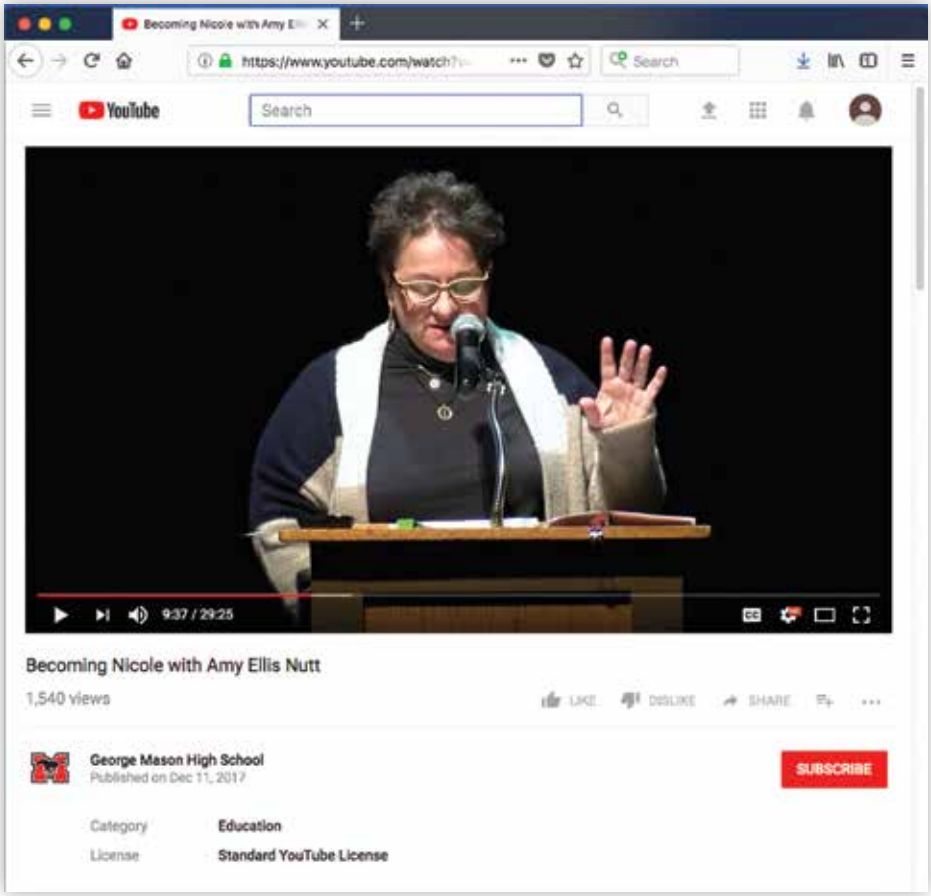
• "Islam: A shining beacon against the darkness of repression, segregation, intolerance and racism."

This is nothing new, however. WND.com's Bob Unruh reported in 2006 that in Nyssa, Oregon, students were being taught the "Five Pillars" (foundational beliefs) of Islam in such a way that a "lawyer who argued a previous dispute over this issue to the U.S. Supreme Court said such methodologies wouldn't 'last 10 seconds' if it were Christianity being taught." As one upset mother, Kendalee Garner, put it, her 13-year-old son was being "indoctrinated that Islam is a religion of peace, and being dressed up as a Muslim, being taught prayers, and scriptures out of the Quran."

Tragically, schools today are intellectual wastelands where bad is called good and good is called bad. Here are some more examples of curricular craziness:

• Inmates running the asylum — it was reported in February that students at California High School in San Ramon chose to ban the National Anthem from high-school assemblies, claiming that the song's third verse is racist.

• Apparently, though, the students who read the anthem and are offended are in the minority, because official numbers showed late last year that most California children cannot read or do math at even a basic level.



Transitioning to lunacy: While Huck and Harper are out, a Virginia school did see fit to invite journalist Amy Ellis Nutt to indoctrinate its students with "transgender" ideology. The Nutt talk included the notions that "gender is a spectrum" and "toddlers can be transgender."

AP Images

Get 'em young: This is an educator in Claremont, New Hampshire, reading a left-wing book on bullying to young students. Though innocuous sounding, "anti-bullying programs" have become a Trojan horse through which the LGBTQ+ agenda is peddled to children.

• But the Golden State has nothing on Baltimore, Maryland, a third of whose schools had *no students proficient in math in 2017*.

• Washington, D.C.'s widely acclaimed Ballou High School found the solution, however, with its 100-percent 2017 graduation rate. It accomplished this by, in a brazen scam, handing diplomas to every single one of its many failing students.

• Then again, you could just keep the focus off the three R's. The Conejo Valley Unified School District in California did this by exposing minors to pornographic material under the guise of teaching literature, creating a huge controversy, it was reported in December. Not to be outdone, it was revealed a month earlier that Georgia's DeKalb County School District sparked its own fire by giving children as young as 11 work dealing with "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" — despite their parents having tried to opt them out. Also last year, the Rocklin Academy School in Rocklin, California, did likewise, enraging parents by introducing the subject of "transgenderism" to kindergarteners.

• Despite this, it's often hard to get even an apology for such trespasses; nonetheless, one teacher's students at Rockingham Middle School in North Carolina last year were expected to issue one — standing in front of the class — for being white and Christian and having the "privilege" that supposedly bestows (they should just move to Delaware and identify as black Buddhists).

• But this isn't the only school today where accountability (for *something*) still reigns. While education and police officials wouldn't stop the Parkland killer, they did thwart eight-year-old Floridian Jordan Bennett in 2013, 10-year-old Ohioan Paul Entingh in 2014, and six-year-old Coloradan Elijah Thurston in 2015. All three boys were suspended from school — for pointing their fingers in the shape of a gun. It was not reported whether they possessed assault digits and armor-piercing nails.

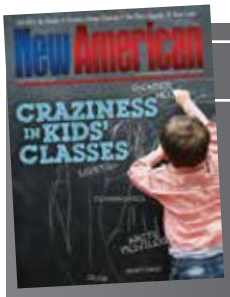
• Then there are assault sandwiches. Most of the publicized perils of the quintessentially American PB&J had concerned only nut allergies. That is, until Verenice Gutierrez, principal of Harvey Scott K-8 School in Portland, Oregon, warned in 2012 that offering an immigrant student a peanut butter and jelly sandwich could be "racist." This is yet another example of why I say — regardless of what's on the menu — how anyone with a nut allergy could set foot in a state school and not experience immediate anaphylactic shock is beyond me.

• While this craziness could be remedied by a return to God, He is, again, unwelcome in today's government schools. A good example came out of Indiana last year, when a McCordsville Elementary School first-grade teacher "sent home a letter asking kids not to talk about 'God,' 'Jesus,' and the 'Devil,'" reported Fox59.com. So now, if Augustine of Hippo was right about evil being the absence of good, Satan can slither in subtly, wearing different labels and in guileful guises. Meanwhile, the only time we hear the Lord's name in classrooms today is when it's taken in vain.

Note that most of this essay's examples of lunacy are from recent years not mainly because school political correctness is a worsening problem, but because there's no shortage of such examples. This moral rot is everywhere in some measure, touching everyone. Thus it is true that if your child attends school, he will be indoctrinated and corrupted — all that varies is the degree of the soul-rending child abuse.

Why is this happening? There are many reasons, some deeper, some shallower; some more innocent, some more malevolent, but I'd like to examine the deepest one: philosophical corruption. Let's start with an analogy.

Imagine you were formulating a diet for children. Recognizing that laws of human nutrition exist, you'd apply them as best you knew them. For example, we need a certain number of calories to survive, all 13 required vitamins, the necessary minerals, complete protein, etc. Moreover, you'd stress the ingestion of healthful foods whether you or the kids liked them or not, as such a practice accords with the Truth of the matter. What would happen, however, if you fell victim to the delusion that nutritional laws didn't exist, that everything was a matter of "perspective"? How would you then determine diet?



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You'd have nothing left to use as a guide but taste — if it feels good, eat it. Then you perhaps start giving the children what they like, not what they need; or maybe you banish your grandmother's "tried and true" foods because you happen to despise them. Out with the old and in with the new, alluring, factory-engineered, processed formulations! It might be cake for breakfast and ice cream for dinner, and diets would quickly devolve until junk food reigned supreme.

In a sense, this is precisely what's happened today on a moral level. I often cite the 2002 Barna research group study showing that most Americans do *not* believe in Truth (absolute by definition) and are most likely to make what should be moral decisions based on *feelings* — on what "tastes" right, in other words. This phenomenon is only getting worse, too. Barna's data indicated that each succeeding generation is more relativistic/nihilistic than the previous one, with only six percent of 2002's teens believing in Truth.

The point is, however, that if Americans are making decisions based on feelings, decisions on curricula are no exception (in fact, this problem is most acute in highly secular academia). What does this breed? Well, without the objective as a yardstick for determining what's taught, likes and dislikes (fashions) are all that remain. Preference supplants principle; taste subordinates Truth. So in the curricular "diet," you start giving kids what they like, not what they need; if something "offends" them, it is discarded, having been judged "bad" by now-deified feelings. Or the feelings of the ideologues in control hold sway, and they may banish their grandfather's tried and true educational paradigm because they despise it. Of course, in-fashion (liked) groups get what they want, too; hence "Afro-centric curriculum" for blacks, feminism for girls, "LGBTQ+" pablum for the ever-burgeoning alphabet crew, etc. "If it feels good, teach it" creates an intellectual junk-food wasteland.

What is the solution? We must return to basics, of course, but this is more than just the three R's. Nothing is more basic than the universal, eternal and unchanging: Truth. There is no such thing as a "value free" education, and this is why the values instilled must not be values, but what the Founding Fathers and other great men of Christendom stressed: virtues. "Values" is, essentially, a synonym for "taste," not good by definition, but *neutral* (Mother Teresa had values, but so did Hitler). Virtues, however, are that set of "good moral habits." Just as nutritional rules eliminate guesswork and inform about what to feed the body, virtues do likewise and relate what to feed the mind and soul. Some examples are justice, fortitude, temperance, diligence, faith, hope, and prudence.

Speaking of which, prudence dictates that the now old advice, "Stay in school, kids," has become a recipe for destruction. Infamous Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was a mass-murdering psychopath, but he did correctly observe, "Education is a weapon whose effects depend on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed." Tragically, upon considering today's American government schools, Stalin would likely smile, give a pat on the back and say, "Keep up the good work, comrades." ■

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Education apocalypse: Academic Director Dr. Duke Pesta has taught at colleges around the country and spoken extensively on the topic of problems with public education. He has witnessed firsthand the political brainwashing and lack of knowledge in students who come from public schools to FPA.

TAKING THEM TO SCHOOL

Dr. Duke Pesta, academic director at FreedomProject Academy, a homeschooling option, defends against attacks targeting homeschooling, and tells why it works better.

Interview of Dr. Duke Pesta
by Robin Kinderman

In our current world of social-justice warriors, radical liberalism, and politically correct safe spaces, many parents are questioning if their children are receiving the best education — or any education at all. For the most part, homeschooling or private schooling is an option only for the affluent or devoutly religious. What does that leave, then, for providing a good education for the rest of the populace?

Dr. Duke Pesta, academic director at FreedomProject Academy, is passionate about education and fervently defends the classical education that FPA provides. He explains why a classical education is better than the education a public-school student receives, and how online schooling is a very real possibility for average-income families.

The New American: *Those in the public-school realm often have an opinion of homeschoolers as being "indoctrinated" children, with severe religious ideals. They're being brainwashed by their parents; they're a cult; homeschooling is for overprotective parents who want to control every part of their child's life, etc. What is your rebuttal to all of this?*

Dr. Duke Pesta: Some of the words you just used — cult, overprotective parents, indoctrination — are ironic coming from the public-school people because that's exactly what's happening in the public schools. You could make an argument that the collectivism of public schools — now especially because we've centralized them, federalized them under things like Common Core — what you've got now is one great big, government-sponsored cult that is teaching kids the same thing, imposing all sorts of ideologies on kids like transgenderism, global warming, homosexuality; getting these kids sexualized way younger developmentally than they should be — forcing that on your kids! So, it's not just the pot calling the kettle black, it's the pot calling the *imaginary* kettle black. I would go this way: Every homeschool family is different; every homeschool family has a different way of doing it, has a different angle to it, has a different set of family values behind it. So ironically, homeschooling is the antidote to the cult of big government public schooling — especially now that it's all been federalized. So, there's that thing, number one.

The second thing I would point out — the only remaining argument from the public schools is that homeschoolers are not socialized. When you look at what's going on in high school, middle school, and elementary school campuses, you've got sex between younger kids at younger ages, you've got an epidemic of bullying, you've got an inability of schools to protect your kids. If this is the type of socialization the public schools teach, our kids don't need it. I would much rather have my moms and dads in charge of who my kids hang out with, the kind of recreation they do, the type of athletics they do. And I'd much rather have my moms and dads make their own choices about when to teach sex, or values, or virtues to the kid. So, there's really no compelling argument in that cliched list that you hear from advocates of public schools. They're losing more and more kids — non-religious homeschooling is at its highest level ever because a lot of moms and dads who aren't religious are balking at the bullying, the intimidation, the indoctrination, the weak standards, the standardized testing.

TNA: *That leads into my next question: Let's say you have some parents who are interested in the classical education, but they aren't religious. What do you tell them?*

Pesta: Well, we *do* have students in

AP Images

Common corrosion: Since 2009, public schools have been forced to adopt Common Core standards. Touted as enforcing educational standards, the program completely rewrote the rules, resulting in illogical math strategies and subjective science tests that ask about feelings.

FreedomProject who do not identify religiously. We make it very clear that we're two things: We're a classical school, which means we teach logic, we teach economics, we teach real history, we teach kids *how* to think, not *what* to think. We're a classical school. But we're also a classical school that's rooted firmly in Judeo-Christian values, which means we believe that the Greco-Roman world — with its focus on reason, rationalism, and logic — is perfectly compatible with the Bible and biblical revelation. And so, morally and ethically, we try to instill in our kids the values that go all the way back to the Sermon on the Mount, back through the Ten Commandments, and in educational classes, generally, we focus on those subjects like logic and reason and history. So, we let them know, and most moms and dads who are from a secular perspective love it because we don't talk about theology and we don't talk about dogma in our classrooms. We're non-denominational. Since we're a non-church school, we believe it would be inappropriate if we taught your kids a specific denomination. We'd be taking from you the right to teach whatever your denomination is.

So when we talk about biblical values, we talk about shared understandings of Judeo-Christian values as they have obviously manifested themselves in the history, art, politics, and culture of the last 2,000 years. Most secular moms and dads who have taken us aren't the least bit bothered by the fact that their kids have to take the Latin language. They're not bothered that we have them read the great Christian writers of Western culture such as Dante, or Milton, or Shakespeare, because they understand that that's part of our history and culture.

TNA: *How about deeply religious families? Do the parents mind their children being exposed to texts by authors whose religious traditions may be different from their own?*

What you've got now is one great big, government-sponsored cult that is teaching kids the same thing, imposing all sorts of ideologies on kids like transgenderism, global warming, homosexuality; getting these kids sexualized way younger developmentally than they should be.

Pesta: I'm proud to say that not a single one of our parents has ever complained that their kid is a Baptist but is getting too much Catholic, or their kid is Catholic but is getting too much Lutheran. We've done a really good job keeping those decisions with the family. And those decisions include each student using his own family's Bible for the scriptural readings.

In our literature classes, they're reading traditional, classical texts. They'll read Plato and Aristotle and Homer and Virgil — the great Greek and Roman writers. But they're also going to read Dante and Milton and Shakespeare and Chaucer — the great Christian writers. They'll read the Roman-Catholic Dante in the 14th century. Then they'll read the radical Protestant Milton in the 17th century. Then they'll read the Anglican C.S. Lewis in the 20th century. Then they'll read the Book of Job in ancient Jewish text from 3,000 years ago. And so, consequently they're getting exposed to all sorts of different writers. Any complaint you might have is undercut by the fact that you're reading six other different kinds of Jewish/Christian writers.

TNA: *Some of the "classical" classes that you offer are Latin, phonics, logic, philosophy, and rhetoric. Why are these classes important?*

Pesta: They are the courses that built liberty, freedom, and personal responsibility in Western culture. It's undeniably true that if you go back to the Old Testament, through the New Testament, through the last 2,000 years, that the Judeo-Christian ethic and value system is what gave rise to the Magna Carta. It's what gave rise to the Declaration of Independence. I ask my kids all the time: If the Western world is as bad as all these liberal professors say it is, how come human rights, civil rights, women's rights, minority rights, gay rights — how come those things grew up exclusively in Western culture? I think part of it is because of the tolerance, the flexibility, the historical superiority of the values that emanate to us from the Scriptures. The Founding Fathers, as we know, were deeply studied in a scriptural worldview. We know that liberty and the rights of the *individual* are most championed in Christianity.

Classical education is predicated on

the notion of critical thinking. We want kids to be able to think critically. One of the major problems in American public education right now with all the federal control is that it's short on critical thinking — letting kids think for themselves — and it's long on telling kids how to think and feel. And so, with the type of coercive education they're getting, the only answer to it is critical thinking in classical education. We give them the information, we help them to come to their own opinion, but ultimately they have to decide for themselves what they believe. If logic is thinking logically and correctly, you could make the argument that rhetoric is how you express that in ways that will move other people. Rhetoric is really the science of being able to speak logically and move people with your words to virtue. I think in every way, what we do at FreedomProject — a classical education steeped in Christian values — that is *the* answer to *every* single one of the problems we've named about the government schools.

TNA: *How do you think FPA develops a student as a person?*
Pesta: The primary objective of a classical education is to create and mold a human being in virtuous action. It's not about getting a job. All this career-ready crap you hear in middle school and high school; that's the wrong way to approach it. The first purpose of education is to morally improve students, make them more civilized, and make them more understanding and thoughtful and reflective. Make them better people! And only secondarily do you make them more proficient in the subject area. Ironically, in the American government schools today, character education *and* actual education for knowledge and mastery — those things have been eradicated. What we're doing is very different: Read the great books of Western culture, learn how to think logically, study languages such as Latin that force you to become more methodical, so that your character develops, your worldview develops. And then because of those emphases, your mastery of subject matter will rise, and you'll be able to integrate your personal and professional life into one wholistic unit, which is the objective here — to be a full person.

TNA: *Playing off that, what obvious differences do you see in a student who has gone through FreedomProject, versus one who hasn't?*
Pesta: One thing that's obvious immediately is that our kids are farther along. When kids come to us from the public schools, they're usually now about two years behind where they should be; they've been treated like babies in some regards. The other thing we recognize is that our kids are growing up largely free from the bullying, from the sexualization. All those things that the public schools do to take power and decisions away from the parents — to strip parents of their right to raise their kids as they see fit — we give back to parents. We give grades and tests and assignments and really important teaching on really important books, and let the parents do the rest. That's the way it should be. Parents should be the primary points for moral and ethical development, and we should just help it. In the public schools, they're taking away the morality. In the public schools, the Judeo-Christian morality and ethical and virtuous behavior in a religious context is being replaced with radical, political activism.

TNA: *With private and online schools, two obstacles people face are cost and time. What do you tell parents who don't know if they can afford to have one parent stay at home?*
Pesta: It's a sacrifice. Like anything worth doing with your kids, it's a sacrifice. You've got to find a way to make it work. If you've checked out our prices, we're really low. For less than $2,100 a year, you get a full year's worth of classes, taught real-time by actual teachers. We're fully accredited, so your kids can get diplomas from us. Our graduates are getting into good colleges. We do have tuition assistance, so for needy families,

Photos: FPA

Details make a difference: Unlike other online schools, students at FPA are required to attend class at specific times, and are taught real time by a teacher. With headphones and a microphone, students can ask questions, interact with their classmates, and receive one-on-one attention if needed.

we can and do help. Having said that, there's also the other side of the coin, which — as you said — is time. That seems to be the bigger problem. A lot of times, mom and dad are both working so they can buy their kid leather tennis shoes and cellphones and little computers and have them in very costly after-school experiences. That's fine. If you want to have mom and dad working so that you can have all those luxuries for your kid, then do it. But are those luxuries, in the long run, more important than their education? What's your kid going to remember 20 years from now? Where they went that particular summer vacation? Or are they going to remember the education they got that now lets them take care of their own family? If we're working so hard to provide luxuries, and scanting kids on their education, we're doing them a disservice. Having said that, older kids can manage themselves, so for upper middle-school and high-school kids, they should be able to do a good part of this without having mom look over their shoulder.

TNA: *If a kid is interested in FPA, but is scared or hesitant, is there any way to "test the waters"?*

Pesta: Sure. Any mom can call us at any time and we'll give her some access codes, and she can hop into a couple of live classes and watch in real time. We also have a lot of classes recorded so she can watch three or four dozen classes if she wants, just to get a sense of how they work and what goes on in them. We have placement exams that are free, so if a mom out there just wants to get a sense of where her son or daughter in fourth grade would rank against our fourth graders, just take a placement exam. There's no obligation. Take our test, we'll give you the grades, and we'll tell you exactly where your kid fits. It can't hurt to take a look and see.

TNA: *What about workload? Is there any good way to estimate that?*

Pesta: It's the workload you'd expect of any student. You're going to take four to five classes a semester, and they're going to have homework in those classes. The nice thing is, we don't have the kids eight hours a day. The average for a middle- or high-schooler is 10 hours a week that they're actually in classes. If you factor in all the wasted time in public schools — gym and study hall and lunch and recess, and all this other stuff that kills a day — you can give a kid a really, really good education in three hours. We have a good pace because the kids aren't sitting in a classroom hour after hour. They're getting a chance to diversify what they do. You're able to focus more in shorter periods of time. When you think about the types of assignments [public school] teachers are mandated to introduce to kids under Common Core, where they're taking up time in math to do politics, they're taking up time in social studies not to teach history but to talk about 116 different genders, they're burning up classroom time. They're dragging it out, and they're politicizing it, and they're watering it down, and they're adding all sorts of things that belong at home with the parents, not in the schools. On every front, it's a failure, and the results of what's happening in our government schools prove that.

TNA: *Do you discuss current topics in your classes so that there isn't any chance of a high-schooler getting out in the world and being naïve?*

Pesta: Of course! We don't just teach kids American history, we teach kids American civics too, which means we teach the history of what happened in this country, and they also read the founding documents, they read the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. They come to understand not just the history of America, but how government is supposed to function. So if they're taking an American Civics class and learning about the Second Amendment — if you look at the news right now, the Second Amendment is under attack — so in a class like that, of course they would talk about current events. What they *won't* get is a one-sided, ideological cramming into their head of a worldview they must adopt or else.

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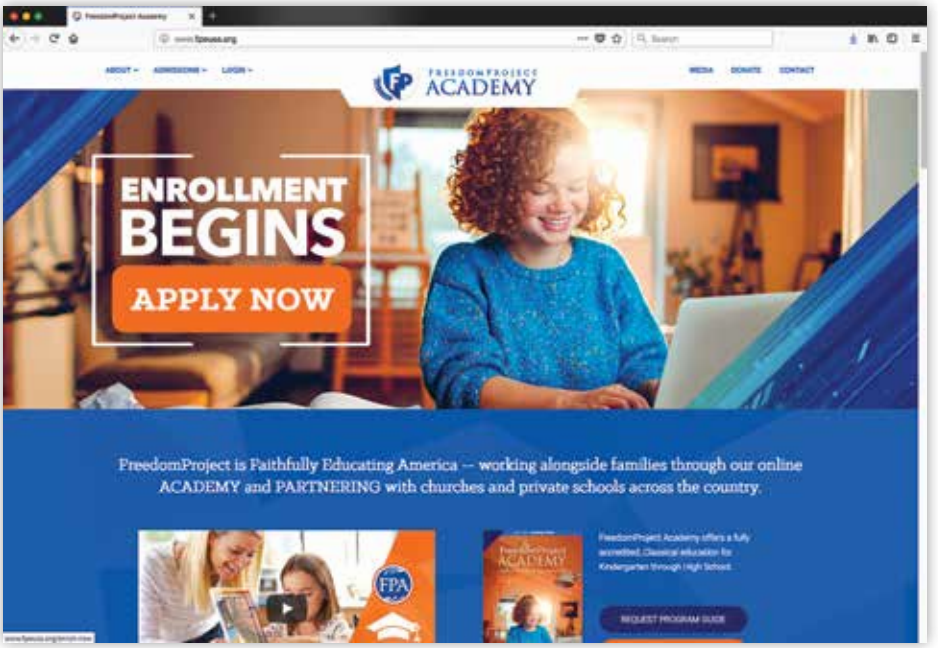
As Dr. Pesta said, and as most of us know, public schools have been declining in quality for decades, and are now at an all-time low. Rather than being educated objectively, children are being molded into liberal social-justice warriors. If you are considering taking your child out of public school and would like to learn more about FPA, check out the website at http://www.fpeusa.org. ■



Dodging the decline: As public education declines, more and more parents are seeking out alternative options. FPA offers tuition assistance, free classroom trials, free placement tests, and staff always available to answer any questions and concerns you have. It's worth checking out!

OUT with the OSCARS

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences award show — the Oscars — saw its lowest-ever ratings. But don't hold out hope that the show will now become less liberal.

AP Images

Muzzled yet still partisan: Jimmy Kimmel hosted the 90th annual Academy Awards on March 4. Though his political rhetoric was toned down some, he couldn't resist a few barbs at the White House.

by James Murphy

On March 4, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences held their 90th annual awards show, widely known as the Oscars. For nearly four hours on an early March Sunday night, anyone interested could watch extremely well-dressed celebrities, adorned with expensive jewelry, lecture a worldwide television audience about the social and political issues of their choice. Not surprisingly, a lot of folks passed on that honor. The 2018 Oscars broadcast was the lowest-watched in history, down a stunning 19 percent from 2017. The 26.5 million viewers in 2018 trailed the next lowest year, 2008, by more than five million viewers. The annual program, which used to rival the Super Bowl in viewership, has tumbled in importance to the viewing public.

The Oscar-nominated movies suffer from the same public apathy. Only two of the films nominated for Best Picture, *Dunkirk* (Warner Bros.) and *Get Out* (Universal Pictures), even netted $100 million at the box office. The last true box-office smash to win the Oscar was 2003's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (New Line), which earned over $377 million. It's almost as if Hollywood doesn't care what audiences want anymore. It's as if the motion-picture industry's subjective sense of what is good and worthy of recognition trumps what the public wants.

"The Oscars lost their way back in 1989," according to academy voter Dr. Ted Baehr. Baehr, who once financed films for the Cannon Group, Inc., explained the history of the Oscars. "The major studios decided they needed an awards show to promote their big movies like *Ben Hur*, *The Ten Commandments*, et cetera. And they decided to start the Oscars. The trouble was that they set up a system where you have categories for directors, producers, writers, editors, but the *actors* were the ones influencing the industry," Baehr explained. "It went south in the eighties because in the seventies … you had tax shelter financing. So you had a lot of people doing a lot of financing on

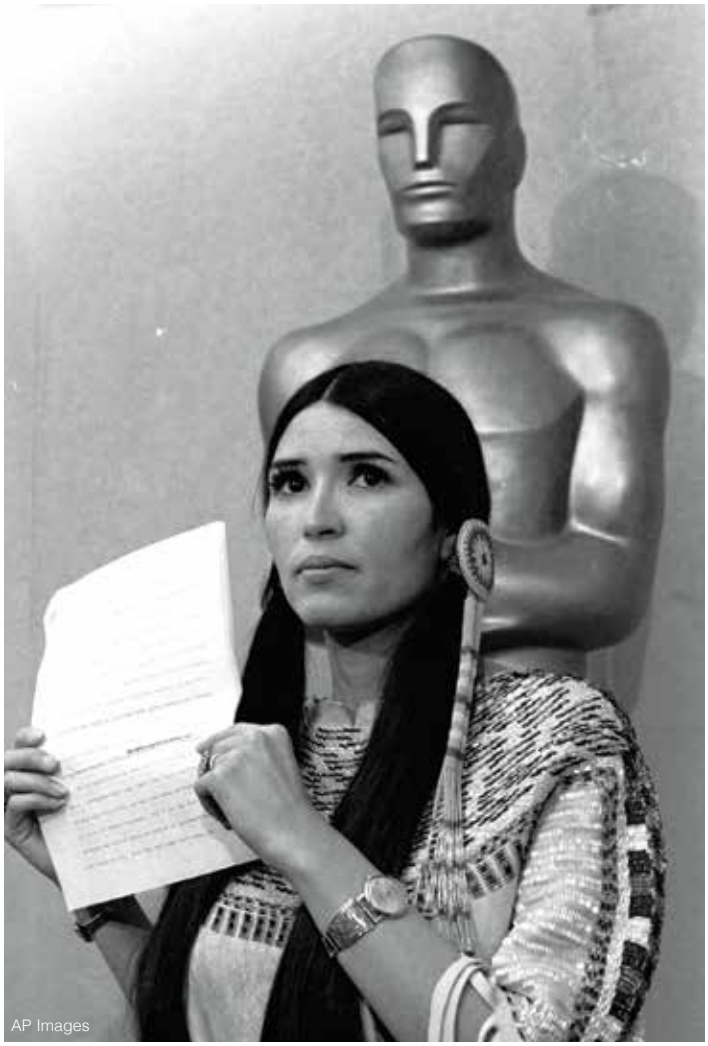
The inmates started running the asylum, so to speak. The actors, those virtue-signaling narcissists who insist on telling us what they think about social and political issues, consist of the largest group of voters for the awards.

a lot of second-rate films. And all an actor has to do is be in one film and get two recommendations and, suddenly, that actor is a voting member of the academy. So the voting members of the academy are now actors that have played in little smarmy independent films or some actors that just want to be part of the crowd."

So at some point in the 1980s, the inmates started running the asylum, so to speak. The actors, those virtue-signaling narcissists who insist on telling us what they think about social and political issues, consist of the largest group of voters for the awards. The result is that the Oscars, once meant to showcase films the public wanted to see, have become a self-congratulatory art house show.

Politics and personal causes used to be *persona non grata* at the Oscars, but that changed in 1973 when Marlon Brando, who was nominated for Best Actor for his performance in *The Godfather*, boycotted the event, sending Native American activist Sacheen Littlefeather in his place. When Brando won the Oscar, Littlefeather refused the award on Brando's behalf in protest against how Native Americans were portrayed in films. The reaction of that 1973 crowd was mixed, with some applauding and some booing.

Five years later, Vanessa Redgrave, who had produced a pro-PLO documentary called *The Palestinian*, won a Best Supporting Actress award and used the occasion to decry the Jewish Defense League, whom she termed "Zionist hoodlums." Again, the crowd reaction was mixed, but the die had been cast. The Oscars, and by extension other awards shows, were now a place in which celebrities could vocally support whatever cause they chose — all it took was winning an award.


AP Images

Politics at the Oscars can be traced back to Marlon Brando sending activist Sacheen Littlefeather to decline his Best Actor award for *The Godfather* in protest of Hollywood's stereotyping of Native Americans.

Despite what you might think of the politics attached, at least Brando's stunt and Redgrave's speech required some courage. In both of those occasions, neither actor knew what to expect in response to their statements. The actors and actresses of today want to be seen as brave speakers of their own truth. In actuality, they are just parrots in a liberal echo chamber. Whatever the current leftist cause *du jour*, you can be certain that a monolithic theater of like-minded celebrities will be wearing like-colored ribbons or black clothing to symbolize their own morality regarding that cause. Whether it is gun control, global warming, or the #MeToo movement, the acting glitterati will be there letting you know which way you should think.

This year's virtue-signaling crown was taken by Oprah Winfrey at the Golden Globes in January, as she accepted the Cecil B. de Mille Award. In a speech hailed nearly unanimously in the mainstream media as "rousing," "show-stopping," and "powerful," Winfrey articulated her oh-so-important feelings on the #MeToo movement.

"So, I want all the girls watching here, now, to know that a new day is on the horizon!" Winfrey exclaimed. "And when that new day finally dawns, it will be because of a lot of magnificent women, many of whom are right here in this room tonight, and some pretty phenomenal men, fighting hard to make sure that they become the leaders who take us to the time when nobody ever has to say 'Me too' again."

It causes one to wonder just what Cecil B. de Mille, a life-long conservative activist, would think about how an award given in his name was used for liberal propaganda.

Winfrey didn't mention her extremely cozy relationship with accused serial sex-

ual abuser Harvey Weinstein in the speech. Perhaps, simply because she loudly signaled her virtue to a fawning crowd and was given outlandish praise in the mainstream media, Oprah believes that her seedy relationship with the Hollywood predator will be overlooked when the 2020 presidential election season begins.

Good luck with that, Oprah.

The 2018 Oscars had many such virtue-signaling moments:

• In presenting one award, immigrant actors Kumail Nanjiani and Lupita Nyong'o told America's illegal immigrants, "We stand with you," a not-so-subtle dig at President Trump's immigration policies.

• Several celebrities wore orange lapel pins in support of Everytown for Gun Safety, a Michael Bloomberg gun-control group. Of course, they did this while being protected by more than 500 armed security officers.

• Someone named Common gave a quasi-musical performance referencing the DACA program and the #MeToo movement and demeaning the National Rifle Association. "Immigrants get the benefits; we put up monuments for feminists. Tell the NRA they in God's way."

• In an especially weird moment, Best Actress winner Frances McDormand asked all of the female nominees to stand up and bid the audience to "Look around ladies and gentlemen, because we all have stories to tell and projects we need financed." McDormand ended the bizarre scene by saying, "I have two words to leave you with tonight, ladies and gentlemen: inclusion rider." An inclusion rider is a clause in a contract that ensures diversity in a film.

This year's event was hosted by Jimmy Kimmel. On his late-night show *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, Kimmel has become a voice in favor of ObamaCare and authoritarian gun-control measures. He has also decried tax cuts and, pretty much, takes the opposite position of President Trump and the GOP on every issue. Though somewhat muted on this year's Oscars, Kimmel couldn't resist a few digs at the White House.

AP Images

Hooray for hypocrisy: Possible 2020 presidential candidate Oprah Winfrey spoke about the #MeToo movement at this year's Golden Globes; she has yet to denounce her friend Harvey Weinstein for his reported sexual harassment of women.

"None other than President Trump called *Get Out* the best first three-quarters of a movie he's seen this year," Kimmel joked. Later in the ceremony, Kimmel engaged in a rare moment of honesty as he clowned, "We don't make films like *Call Me by Your Name* to make money. We make them to upset Mike Pence." *Call Me by Your Name* is a film that celebrates the homosexual relationship between an adult and a 17-year-old boy.

Nowhere is Hollywood's attitude toward the movie-going public more apparent than in the movies themselves. This year's Best Picture winner, *The Shape of Water*, is a film about a mute cleaning woman who meets, befriends, and has a sexual relationship with a man-like amphibian creature. In other words, a movie applauding bestiality is what Hollywood considers its best work this year. For those of us who love the movies, this is extremely disconcerting.

The one truly awesome moment of the Oscar ceremony was when Gary Oldman won the Best Actor Oscar for his portrayal of Winston Churchill in the film *Darkest Hour*. Oldman used a portion of his acceptance speech to thank his adopted country of America. "I've lived in America for the longest time and I'm deeply grateful to her for the loves and the friendships I have made and the many wonderful gifts it has given me: my home, my livelihood, my family and now Oscar," Oldman said. But what should have been a moment for huge applause was met with stony silence by the attendees of the event. It's almost enough to make you not want to go to movies anymore. It's definitely enough to make you tune out the Oscars.

But a wise man once said, "He who controls the media controls the culture." That man was none other than the aforementioned Dr. Ted Baehr who, in 1985, founded Movieguide, a ministry that reviews movies and television from a Christian perspective. Baehr refuses to yield the battlefield of culture to left-wing ideologues. Movieguide's mission is to "redeem the values of the entertainment industry, according to biblical principles, by influencing industry executives and artists."

Although he is one of the voting members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Dr. Baehr doesn't feel the Oscars are a true representation of the industry. "Nobody goes to see these films," Baehr said. "The *LA Times* does an article on how much money a movie *loses* if it wins the Oscar. Moviegoers suddenly see the Oscar as being a symbol that this is the type of movie that they don't want to see."

In addition to being a service that shows parents which films are family friendly, Dr. Baehr sees Movieguide as market research for the entertainment industry. Each year, the organization issues an annual report to the entertainment industry detailing trends in viewership and what types of movies make the most money. This year's report observed that films deemed more family friendly by Movieguide averaged $51.70 million in profit per movie, while the least family-friendly films averaged $11.67 million.

"We do all the economic analysis, and

movieguideawards.com

Oscars alternative: Producer Ramsey Naito and director Tom McGrath accept the Movieguide award for Best Family Movie for their film *The Boss Baby*. Dr. Ted Baehr called the movie "the most pro-life film I've seen." Movieguide rates movies based on storytelling and wholesomeness.

we give it to the studios," Baehr said. "G rated films do about five times better than R rated films, PG films do about three times better, PG13 do about four times better."

Someone in Hollywood is listening. When Movieguide began in 1985, more than 80 percent of movies in the box office were rated R. Today, only 34 percent of movies released have an R rating. "What we call Hollywood is two groups: There are major studios that release 40 percent of the movies … and there's the independents that produce 60 percent of the movies," Baehr explained. "The good news is that among the independents the whole world has changed. It used to be just sleazy sex films done by Harvey Weinstein. Now, the independents (include) a lot of Christian films. This month we've got terrific films from *Samson* to *Paul, Apostle of Christ*…. There's a flood of them right now. So, the independents are moving in the right direction."

Each year, in connection with the release of its annual report to the entertainment industry, Movieguide hosts its own award show, honoring the best films and performances of the past year, a sort of anti-Oscars, if you will. These awards honor not only quality in motion pictures and television, but they also value faith and inspiration, things in short supply in the rest of the entertainment media.

This year's Movieguide awards were held in Los Angeles on February 2. One of the movies honored was Dreamworks' *The Boss Baby*, a film described by Dr. Baehr as "the most pro-life film I've seen." The plot of the film doesn't seem the stuff of current-day Hollywood. "Babies are created in Heaven. God is concerned about people not having babies, so He sends a little angel down," Baehr described. "When the angel is discovered he says he's on a mission from God and he acknowledges that Jesus is the boss."

This year's Best Picture winner, *The Shape of Water*, is a film about a mute cleaning woman who meets, befriends, and has a sexual relationship with a man-like amphibian creature. In other words, a movie applauding bestiality is what Hollywood considers its best work this year.

"So, Hollywood is doing some good," Baehr acknowledged.

In America's culture war, it's tempting to cede ground that we feel is already lost. To many Americans, Hollywood is synonymous with Sodom and Gomorrah, a place better left for the Almighty to sort out with fire and brimstone. In the culture war, the battle for Hollywood seems one-sided. One side is extremely well-armed, with a cacophonous media machine, a vast misinformation weapon designed to demoralize its opponent. The other side is armed with a moral compass and an unshakeable faith in a just God. Shots are fired via television shows, movie theaters, and even award shows. Casualties are measured in tweets, Facebook posts, and box-office receipts.

People such as Dr. Baehr and the good folks at Movieguide remind us that not everyone in the movie business is lost. And for the sake of that remnant, the battle must go on, regardless if one side, mainstream Hollywood, is the giant Goliath and the other side, we the movie-going public, is a puny boy named David. Fortunately, David came out pretty well in that confrontation.

Movieguide is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization making a real difference in Hollywood. If you wish to assist Dr. Baehr, please go to www.movieguide.org to learn how you can help. ■

AND THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT IS — THE SAME AGAIN!

Vladimir Putin has now been elected to his fourth term as president, consolidating communist-like control through a rigged ballot box and a slew of new laws.

AP Images

Cult of personality? In the election of 2018, Vladimir Putin didn't debate any of his opponents for president, yet he won handily.

by Tatiana Christy

Many people ask: "Why have elections in Russia, when the result is always the same? Why go through such a masquerade?" They don't understand that authoritarian states need elections to "legitimize" their regime by a periodic display of national enthusiasm, to keep the same people in power forever. On March 18, the world yawned again, looking at Vladimir Putin's results in the polls. Yet again the Russian president, who has been in power for 18 years, enjoyed a landslide victory, grabbing 76.7 percent of the vote. "It has become like a déjà vu that never ends for Russia. Every time there are elections, the winner is always the same," says Elena Gorbuhina, a 34-year-old Moscow engineer. Indeed, a whole generation in Russia has grown up without knowing any other head of state outside of the figurehead Dmitry Medvedev, and without having a chance to compare Putin's leadership to anyone else's. Now he has been elected again for his fourth presidential term with an impressive 56 million votes cast for him and 67-percent voter turnout — a goal that the Russian administration wanted to achieve. And it did — relying not only on voters' enthusiasm but on many tactics to control the vote.

Putin did not have any serious rivals. He would not have allowed anyone to jeopardize his position. Seven people were his "opponents" at the elections, but none of them came even close to challenging him. The real threat — Alexei Navalny — a lawyer and a prominent opponent of the Kremlin, who criticizes and exposes corruption among the ruling elite — was denied entry into the presidential race over an embezzlement conviction, which he claims was fabricated in order to harass him. Although Navalny — a pro-Western politician who wants to move Russia away from its totalitarian past — would not have had a chance to win, his widespread support, especially among younger, urbanized, and educated people, gave Putin's regime serious reasons to worry. After his ban from entering the elections, Navalny urged people to boycott them. Many did. But it is very hard to fight Putin's smooth election machine — always producing the same desired output.

Putin never appeared in a single presidential debate, and he never traveled around the country to meet with voters. He never participated in a spontaneous real-time Q&A with a critical reporter or media. He didn't need to. His entire government machine, with its tremendous resources, was put into service for his reelection. Putin himself was never even in the spotlight; he even disappeared from the radar a few weeks before the vote and was absent for more than two weeks, without anyone knowing where he was. This may sound unbelievable to a U.S. voter, but this is how elections happen in an authoritarian captured state, which Russia has turned into under the endless rule of this former KGB agent.

Putin's closest "rival" in these elections was Pavel Grudinin — the new leader of the Russian Communist Party — calling himself the good capitalist, who stands for turning privatized businesses into social enterprises. He received only 11 percent of the vote. The third-place contender was the ever-present fixture of the Russian political scene Vladimir Zhirinovsky of the Liberal Democratic party — a militant nationalist with incessant threats to annihilate the West. He received five percent of the vote.

Then came the most interesting candidate, Ksenia Sobchak, the 36-year-old media personality and socialite who is a staunch critic of Putin — pushing a liberal western agenda. She received only 1.7 percent of the vote, mostly from young, educated urbanites, who would have voted for Alexei Navalny had he been allowed to run. None of these candidates were ever a threat to Putin. They were

part of the elections merely to legitimize his win.

Putin has been in power since 1999 — either as president or as prime minister. Many consider the 65-year-old leader as the eternal ruler of the country, copying the governing style of his communist predecessors. After his first two consecutive four-year presidential terms ended in 2008, he switched places with the prime minister for four years, and it was during this time that he crafted a change to the country's constitution to extend the presidential term to six years. In 2012, he again was elected president — for a six-year term. Now he has been reelected for another six years. Russians already joke that he'll run his next term from Lenin's Mausoleum (meaning that he will continue ruling after death).

But his rule is no joke: During his stay in power, Russia has endured a prolonged and slow strangulation of society through repressive laws that limit social activism, political dissent, and independent media.

After massive protests against Putin started in 2011, he got scared. His permanent occupancy of the presidential office was questioned by the public. What immediately followed was a series of repressive laws against civic rights. These laws criminalized unauthorized protests with fines and prison terms. All of this was justified as a "fight against radicalism." Putin initiated a huge crackdown on nongovernmental organizations and has practically eradicated independent media. Internet freedom in Russia is also affected; the government may shut down websites that "violate Russia law."

It is hard to fight a captured state, especially wherein Putin is presented as the nation's savior. His campaign messages were simple and one-dimensional — they boiled down to: "Russia is the greatest country and those who mess with it will regret it." Military rhetoric, nuclear weapons, patriotism, and blaming the enemy for any problems (with the West being the villain again) is pretty much what Putin's "campaign" entailed. The national propaganda praising him has reached the point of hysteria, resembling the all-too-familiar personality cults during the days of Soviet communism. Even children were not spared and were frequently used as propaganda tools in this grim masquerade.

The only thing Putin was worried about in these elections was voter turnout. There were early indications that it would be quite a bit lower than in previous years. His administration came up with many tricks to rig the system: It introduced a system for people to vote at different voting sections from the one they have been registered at. With that, one person could vote multiple times at different polling stations. The government sent all Russian citizens with mobile phones a message telling them they could vote at any polling station they wanted to. Navalny and his observers exposed this scam before the elections, showing how a person could obtain many "permits" to vote at as many stations he went to. The government, as usual, denied any violations.

Security cameras and observers caught multiple cases of ballot stuffing across the country. However, the majority of voting sections in the country lacked cameras and monitors, and so critics could only speculate on the size of the vote-rigging in Russia. Ironically, teachers usually administer the vote and commit the election violations. Russians mostly vote in school buildings, and the teachers are the ones who are on the voting commissions. Teachers are also used as agitators to propagate the government's message during election time. One instructor at a university in Crimea was caught on camera threatening fines for students who do not vote. This same teacher offered raffle rewards for those who voted. Putin won in Crimea with more than 90 percent of the vote. The peninsula was the showcase of Putin's elections — Putin chose the election day to coincide with the date of Crimea's annexation.

To boost voter turnout, election day was made to look like a national holiday in Russia: Free food and drinks were offered, free concerts were held, entertainers were hired to urge people to vote. No effort was spared to lure citizens to the election booths. And no effort was spared to harass Navalny's supporters and stop their attempts to monitor and report on voting violations.

Despite Putin's victory, he really cannot ignore millions of Russians who are angry with him — for failure to address corruption, for being part of Russia's oligarchic model of governance, for its international isolation and growing military rhetoric. That's why on many ballots Russians who went to vote wrote angry words and obscenities, saying words such as "Enough!" "Get out!" "Tired of you!" etc. "Young people are losing patience with this situation and are more vocal about their discontent with the Putin government," says Igor Danilevsky, a professor at the Moscow Research University.

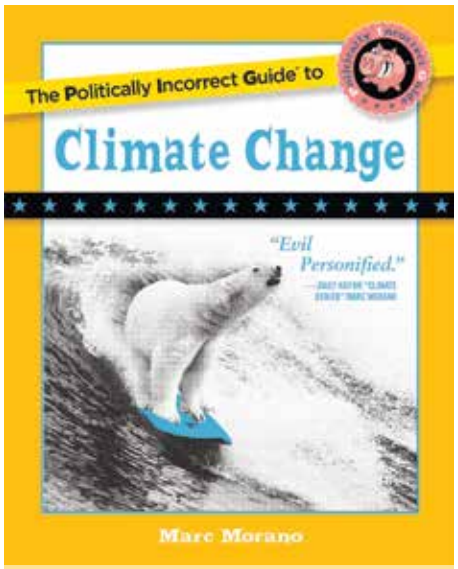
"Elections without choice are no elections" is the slogan of Putin's critics. Some observers say that Russia today is a boiling pot under pressure that could unexpectedly explode. How soon (and whether) its society might attempt to loosen Putin's grip remains to be seen. ■

AP Images

Voting is a sweet deal: To boost turnout in the Russian presidential elections and boost the supposed legitimacy of the election, many polling sites gave away free food as an enticement to vote.

Climate-change Claptrap

Marc Morano explains in his new book how media and scientists on a mission have dented logic, banged around facts, crashed careers, and disappeared disagreements.



The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change, by Marc Morano, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2018, 200 pages, paperback.

by James Murphy

He has been called "evil personified" by the left-wing blog Daily Kos. The *New York Times* called his website, ClimateDepot.com, "divisive and toxic." A "wanted" poster of him, claiming he was a "climate criminal," was displayed at the site of the 2015 UN Climate Summit in Paris. In 2009, *Rolling Stone* magazine listed him as one of the planet's 17 "climate killers." In 2012, Media Matters named him the "Climate Mis-informer of the Year." With bona fides like that, you just know that Marc Morano is on to something. In fact, he has just written a new book, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change*, and it should ruffle a few more feathers in the climate-alarmist community.

Remember the whole "the Amazon rainforest is disappearing" trope that environmentalists used to peddle? Morano is one of the main reasons we stopped hearing about that. His 2000 documentary, *Amazon Rainforest: Clear Cutting the Myths*, was a main reason that false narrative died. The film showed that, far from disappearing, the Amazon was one of the most intact and thriving forests in the world. It also showed that celebrities and environmental activists were not trying to assist the native population of the forest, but exploit them. So Marc Morano has some experience in exposing junk science and the political movements behind it.

In his new book, Morano exposes much of the misinformation, obfuscation, and outright lying that the climate alarmists must do in order to keep their own false narrative alive. Morano uncovers the bullying and arm-twisting that goes on behind the scenes in academia so that the global-warming/climate-change scaremongering remains in the forefront of today's news.

Morano freely admits that he's no scientist. His degree is in political science, which is the perfect background for the climate-change debate, since much of the debate doesn't concern science but politics. But that's not to say that Morano's new book contains no scientific information. Indeed, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change* is chock-full of science.

Detailing a plethora of climate-related scares dating back 200 years, Morano points out that climate scientists have been warning us of apocalypse for a long time. Those frightening predictions have just as often included global cooling as global warming. Perhaps that is why the climate-alarmist community has now settled on the more ubiquitous moniker of "climate change," rather than global warming or global cooling.

Morano points out that even in the Victorian era there were skeptics, such as one editorial writer for the *Brisbane Courier*: "The 1871 editorial writer even foreshadowed how the promoters of the climate change panic would not allow actual observational evidence to sway their claims: 'Much observation, which ought to correct a tendency to exaggerate, seems in some minds to have rather a tendency to increase it.'"

More recently, Morano details how the global-cooling scare of the 1970s slowly and deliberately morphed into the global-warming scare in 1980s. There are several examples of scientists who were once certain of global cooling transforming into disciples of global warming, such as Obama science advisor John Holdren.

When we're told that there is scientific consensus on the subject of global warming, we should take that claim with a grain of salt. Morano deconstructs the "97-percent consensus" assertion from several angles and shows it to be a complete fabrication. One source for the 97-percent number is Australian researcher John Cook, who analyzed nearly 12,000 research papers on climate change between 1991 and 2011 in coming up with the overblown consensus figure. However, a closer look at the abstracts of the 11,944 peer-reviewed papers cited in Cook's 97-percent figure shows that 66.4 percent of the studies expressed no opinion, whatsoever, on anthropogenic global warming. Just where Cook came up with the 97-percent number, no one really knows.

Morano also goes to bat for that much-vilified trace atmospheric gas carbon dioxide. CO_2 makes up a whopping 0.04 percent of our atmosphere, and of that tiny fraction, man is responsible for only 3.5 percent of all CO_2 emitted each year. That the very air we exhale has been turned into a pollutant says much about the agenda of the climate alarmists. Once we stop burning fossil fuels and find that CO_2 is still

rising, owing primarily to off-gassing from oceans as they continue to warm folowing the last Ice Age, what would the next step be? Fewer people, perhaps?

And Morano has some heavyweight scientists in his corner in the defense of carbon dioxide. Among them is the successor to Albert Einstein, Princeton's Freeman Dyson, who said, "I like carbon dioxide, it's very good for plants. It's good for the vegetation, the farms, essentially carbon dioxide is vital for food production, vital for wildlife." Carbon dioxide is simply *not* a pollutant.

Climate alarmists such as Al Gore have been busy telling us that polar ice is melting. In 2014, Gore said, "The West Antarctic Peninsula is warming about four times faster than the global average." Gore was right but, as usual, incomplete in his proclamation that the western peninsula ice is melting. He conveniently leaves out the fact that the western shelf contains less than 10 percent of the Antarctic ice. The East Antarctic ice sheet shows either no change or a small amount of cooling. The world's leading carbon-credit salesman also leaves out the 91 volcanoes located beneath the western peninsula. Geothermal heat from volcanoes has a tendency to melt ice.

Morano does a complete takedown of Michael Mann's infamous "hockey stick" graph. He shows how the claims of "hottest year ever" every few years are nothing but data-manipulating sleight-of-hand. He dismantles the very idea of climate modeling as evidence for global warming. He details the Climategate scandal and the reasons why it was a big deal and how it discredited Michael Mann and other data-fudging scientists. Morano also shows exactly how and why the term *global warming* transformed into *climate change*.

Interspersed throughout Morano's narrative are highlighted sections, which contain sometimes humorous and always maddening tidbits exposing the hypocrisy and obfuscation of climate alarmists. In addition, *Did you know?* sections, which give more interesting morsels of information, are distributed throughout the book.

There are too many scientists who dissent from the global-warming "consensus" quoted in the book to name them all. But a partial listing of those scientists includes Dr. Judith Curry, the former chair of Georgia Tech's School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; Dr. William Happer, Princeton professor emeritus of physics; Dr. Roy Spencer, a meteorologist and principal research scientist at the University of Alabama-Huntsville; Dr. Richard Lindzen, former professor of meteorology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and geologist Robert Giegengack, the former chair of the Department of Earth and Environmental Science at the University of Pennsylvania.

Although the book is set up in an almost textbook-like way, it definitely does not read like a textbook. Morano's prose is accessible to the layman while giving a great deal of detailed scientific information. *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change* is a potent arrow in the quiver of anyone who is tired of being lectured to by Al Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio and their misinformed minions. This book is definitely worth a read, especially if you want the real story on climate change. ■

Ice Cream Money

Sixth-grade teacher Price Lawrence of Highlands Elementary in Huntsville, Alabama, was astonished when one of his students offered her ice cream money to help Lawrence pay for his father-in-law's funeral.

Lawrence explained on his Facebook page that all of his students exhibited kindness when they learned that he had lost his father-in-law on February 20. "This morning, during first period, my kids could tell I was a little off," he wrote on his page. "When they asked why I wasn't acting normally, I explained to them that my wife's father had passed away this weekend and that I was worried about her."

According to Lawrence, the students gave him hugs and high-fives at dismissal, but one particular student took it a step further. She reportedly gave Mr. Lawrence some coins with a note that read, "Ms. Lawrence. I'm sorry." The student went on to tell Mr. Lawrence, "This is for your wife. I know it was real expensive when my daddy died and I don't really want ice cream today anyways."

Facebook users were so touched by the girl's kindness that they shared the post nearly 300,000 times.

Aiding a Veteran

Police officer Jordan Gaiche of Wausau, Wisconsin, was patrolling one of his neighborhoods on a freezing night when he encountered a strange situation and an opportunity to do something good.

On a below-zero night in Wausau, Officer Gaiche could not help but notice a man walking down the street wearing nothing but a t-shirt and shorts, rather unusual attire for such a cold evening. The officer stopped the man to ask if he was all right.

"I looked down at my temperature gauge and it was negative 7, which kind of concerned me," the officer told WSAW.

The man explained that his elderly neighbor, Ron Barwick, had once again gotten stuck in his broken recliner and that he was on his way to help him. Officer Gaiche agreed to go along to offer some assistance.

"The elderly gentleman had gotten stuck in his recliner and appeared to be immobile and on oxygen," said Gaiche. "It was evident that this chair was the place this man spent most of his time."

According to Gaiche, the chair did not seem like an adequate resting place for Barwick. "It had become more of a trap for injury rather than an assistive device," the officer wrote on his Facebook page. "The neighbor looked up at the man's wife and said: 'I think it's time you guys got a new chair.' The wife sadly replied that she knew they needed a new chair, but could not afford one, as they [cost] around $2,000."

Gaiche told WSAW he was "brokenhearted" when he heard that, especially when he learned that Barwick was a Navy veteran who had served two tours in Vietnam.

It was then that Officer Gaiche decided he wanted to help. He instructed the man's wife to select a new recliner and stated that he would cover the bill.

Gaiche then took to his Facebook page to see if anyone would help him purchase the chair, and was astonished by the outpouring of support for the Vietnam veteran.

"I posted something on Facebook, just to some family and friends at like 5 in the morning on Monday, and within an hour, 6:00 we had over a dozen people that had stood up and responded to the needs of a fellow man," said Officer Gaiche. By the time 36 hours had passed, Officer Gaiche had raised enough to buy the chair. Furniture and Appliance Mart in Wausau even donated the delivery of the new chair.

"I was just really shocked, and incredibly appreciative of the generosity that people had come forth with to help a total stranger," said Gaiche. "Some of the people who donated, I have not seen for a decade…. Some I have never even met."

By February 7, Barwick had a brand new chair. Furniture and Appliance Mart also removed the old one for free.

Meanwhile, Officer Gaiche said, "The moral of this story is to look around you and see all of the great things that people are doing. This world is a good place. Turn off the negativity and focus on making the world just a little bit better."

Crying Toddler, Caring Women

A young, pregnant mother from Waimea, Hawaii, became overwhelmed on February 2 when she found herself waiting for a flight at LAX airport with her toddler, who was having a meltdown. Then, something amazing happened. One by one, women awaiting flights began coming over to the scene to help. By the time they all went their separate ways, the pair was able to get on the flight without further incident.

Witness Beth Bornstein Dunnington described the scene on her Facebook page: "A toddler who looked to be eighteen or so months old was having a total meltdown, running between the seats, kicking and screaming, then lying on the ground, refusing to board the plane." According to Dunnington, the mother was pregnant and traveling alone, and was unable to pick up the child because he was flailing and screaming. "The mother finally sat down on the floor and put her head in her hands, with her kid next to her still having a meltdown, and started crying," she continued.

Dunnington reported that six or seven women from the boarding area approached the young mother and formed a sort of circle around her and her child, as if to shield the scene so as to help minimize the mother's embarrassment. She states that each woman did something different to calm the distressed pair.

Dunnington recalled: "I sang 'The Itsy Bitsy Spider' to the little boy…. One woman had an orange that she peeled; one woman had a little toy in her bag that she let the toddler play with; another woman gave the mom a bottle of water. Someone else helped the mom get the kid's sippy cup out of her bag and give it to him."

Amazingly, the women did not communicate a word to one another about how they were going to help. Instead, they each took on a different role, and within minutes, both the mom and toddler were calm and able to board their flight. "After they went through the door, we all went back to our separate seats and didn't talk about it…. We were strangers, gathering to solve something," Dunnington wrote. ■

— Raven Clabough

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The Waco Tragedy 25 Years Later

Despite years of justifications and denials by the ATF and FBI, it is apparent not only that the assault on the sect was unprovoked, but that government leaders were at fault.

AP Images

Ash heap of liberty: It was one of the saddest moments in American history. Seventy-five members of the Branch Davidians, an off-shoot of the Seventh-Day Adventists, perished in a fire on April 19, 1993, inside their compound a few miles from Waco, Texas, after a 51-day siege by the FBI.

by Steve Byas

The government moved before dawn to launch the raid. Persistent reports indicated that the rebels had stockpiled weapons, which the government had declared illegal. Although intended as a surprise attack, the rebels were forewarned. It is still shrouded in mystery as to who fired the first shot. When the brief shoot-out was over, several Americans were dead.

It was April 19.

On that April 19, 1775, the "embattled farmers" stood and fired the shot heard 'round the world. The British military dictator of Massachusetts, General Thomas Gage, was determined to "nip rebellion in the bud." He intended to do this by stripping away the guns of the American patriots who had resisted the British attempts to abridge their rights.

Since that day, two more significant April 19ths have taken their place in American history. One is the day that Branch Davidians died in a blazing inferno outside Waco, Texas, in 1993. The second was in 1995, when Timothy McVeigh and "others unknown" (in the words of the federal grand jury that indicted McVeigh) took revenge by bombing the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in downtown Oklahoma City.

The tragic events at the Branch Davidian complex were precipitated by the decision of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) to launch a raid on a religious compound known as Mt. Carmel outside Waco, Texas, because the bureau alleged that David Koresh and other leaders of the Branch Davidians (a splinter group of the Seventh-Day Adventists) were stockpiling illegal weapons. The initial February 28 raid was a disaster, leading to the unfortunate deaths of several ATF agents and Branch Davidians.

Then, on April 19, following a 51-day siege by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the compound caught fire and 75 Davidians died a horrible death. The FBI argued that the Bureau was a case of mass suicide, and that it had nothing to do with the fire. President Bill Clinton even callously dismissed their deaths: "Some religious fanatics murdered themselves." But these may have been lies.

The final assault of the FBI was like a war-time military assault, complete with tanks flying American flags. After the tragic ending, someone even hoisted an ATF flag over the burned rubble.

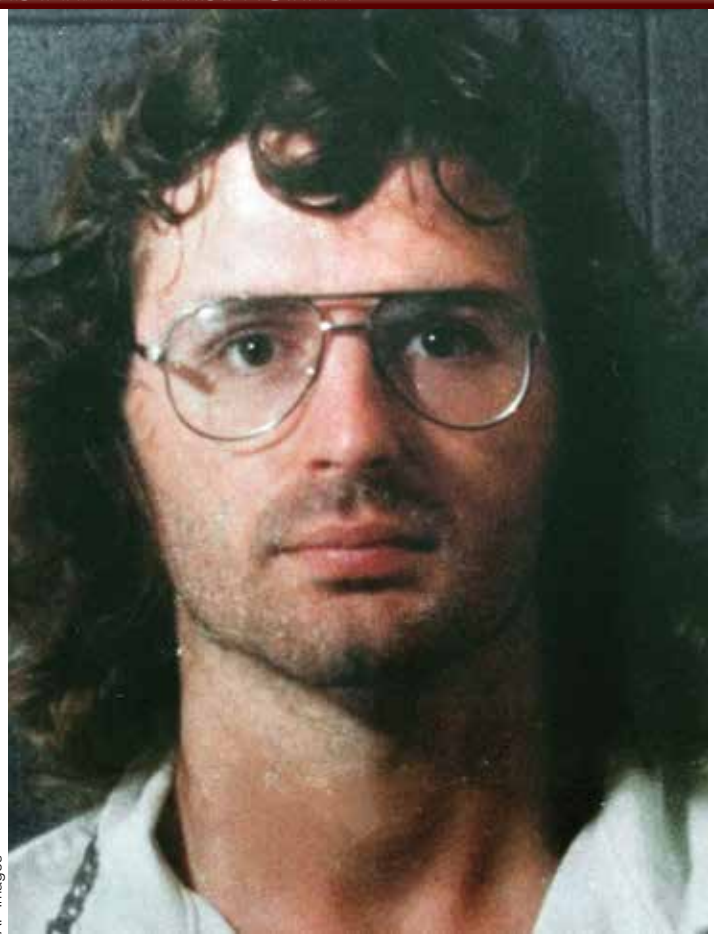
The Reason for the ATF Raid

Why had the ATF targeted the Davidians in the first place? Apparently, some disgruntled former members of the group alleged to authorities that their leader, David Koresh, had indicated that he wished to stockpile illegal weapons out of a desire to launch an assault on someone, though the ATF was always rather vague as to who that someone would have been. Actually, Koresh and other Davidians at Mt. Carmel did have a large number of weapons (about three for every person living on the property), but considering that the average

Texan has four, that is nothing extraordinary.

The purpose of the weapons actually appeared to be more commercial: The Davidians worked through licensed gun dealer Henry McMahon, who purchased a large number of military-style semi-automatic weapons for Koresh to resell. Some additional gun laws passed during the first Bush administration had caused the prices to dramatically increase, and as is usual when a Democrat president, such as Clinton, enters the White House, demand for such *legal* weapons increases even more. McMahon said that these weapons were kept in boxes, and never used, so as to increase their resale value.

One of the Davidians, Paul Fatta, regularly attended gun shows around Texas, selling not only guns, but knives, camouflage clothing, and military "ready-to-eat" meals. Ironically, Fatta was not even present on the day of the raid, because he was at a gun show in Austin.



AP Images

Guilty of oddness: David Koresh, the leader of the Branch Davidians, certainly held religious views not shared by evangelical Christians. But none of those views were crimes under the U.S. Constitution, and it is still unclear if Koresh and his followers had actually committed any violations of federal statutes to justify the raid by the ATF on February 28, 1993.

Once the FBI took over the operation, Bob Ricks became the face of the FBI to the media. He was assistant to the agent in charge; he was assistant to the hostage negotiator; and he was the official spokesman to the media. In 1999, this writer interviewed Ricks for an article in the *Oklahoma Constitution* newspaper. He told me that he believed Koresh's motivation in stockpiling weapons was to "end up in a struggle with the government." If so, the government certainly accommodated him.

In 1992, McMahon was visited by agents of the ATF and asked about Koresh's gun purchases. According to Carol Moore, in her 1995 book *The Davidian Massacre*, McMahon immediately called Koresh, who told him to tell the ATF agents they were "more than welcome" to visit Mt. Carmel and see his guns. "So I walked back in the room, holding the cordless phone and said, 'I've got [Koresh] on the phone. If you'd like to go out there and see those guns, you're more than welcome." They declined.

When the government later prosecuted some Davidian survivors, the government was unable to provide any evidence that Koresh had bought or sold any illegal guns or anything else. Despite this, these allegations were used to obtain a warrant to arrest Koresh — a warrant they supposedly had to serve when Koresh was at the compound, not when he was away from the place. The ATF later claimed that they could not simply serve a warrant on Koresh when he left the compound because they contended he was not leaving Mt. Carmel anymore. Even Ricks told me this contention by the ATF was "not true." The facts are that Koresh shopped frequently in Waco, just a few miles away.

After the raid, the ATF and the FBI offered other reasons to justify the spectacular raid, such as allegations of child abuse. But these were irrelevant. First of all, charges of child abuse are not within the jurisdiction of the ATF, or any other agency of the U.S. government. Second, the Texas Department of Protection and Regulatory Services had conducted an investigation less than a year earlier, and concluded there was no evidence to support such a charge.

Another accusation leveled at the Branch Davidians was that they were a cult, with very unusual ideas about biblical prophecy. But Koresh's religious views and practices, while appearing strange to many secular and Christian Americans alike, are actually quite irrelevant, since religious liberty has long been a cherished part of our American heritage.

Even with all of these accusations, many Americans wondered why tanks were used at the compound. The government used the excuse that Koresh was manufacturing drugs at Mt. Carmel (he was not) as a legal pretense to secure military equipment. Dick Reavis explained in

The FBI argued that it was a case of mass suicide, and that the Bureau had nothing to do with the fire. President Bill Clinton even callously dismissed their deaths: "Some religious fanatics murdered themselves." But these were lies.

his book *The Ashes of Waco*: "The military may not take an 'active' role in civilian law enforcement, except when drug interdiction is involved.… Military personnel can provide a civilian lawman with a rifle, teach him how to use it, supply him with ammunition, even load his weapon for him. But because of the wishes of the Founding Fathers and the authors of the Posse Commitatus Act, soldiers can't pull the trigger."

To obtain such military equipment, including tanks and grenades, the ATF had to provide evidence of illegal drug activity at Mt. Carmel, so they manufactured some very flimsy evidence. In 1987-88, Koresh was engaged in a dispute with George Roden, a rival for Davidian leadership, over control of the property. Roden was eventually expelled from the property, but during the time that he was in control, he had rented some houses on the site to non-Davidians, who Koresh alleged were making drugs on the property. Koresh contacted the sheriff's office that a meth lab was left behind on the property after Roden's expulsion. The sheriff's office then came out and removed all the material that Koresh showed them.

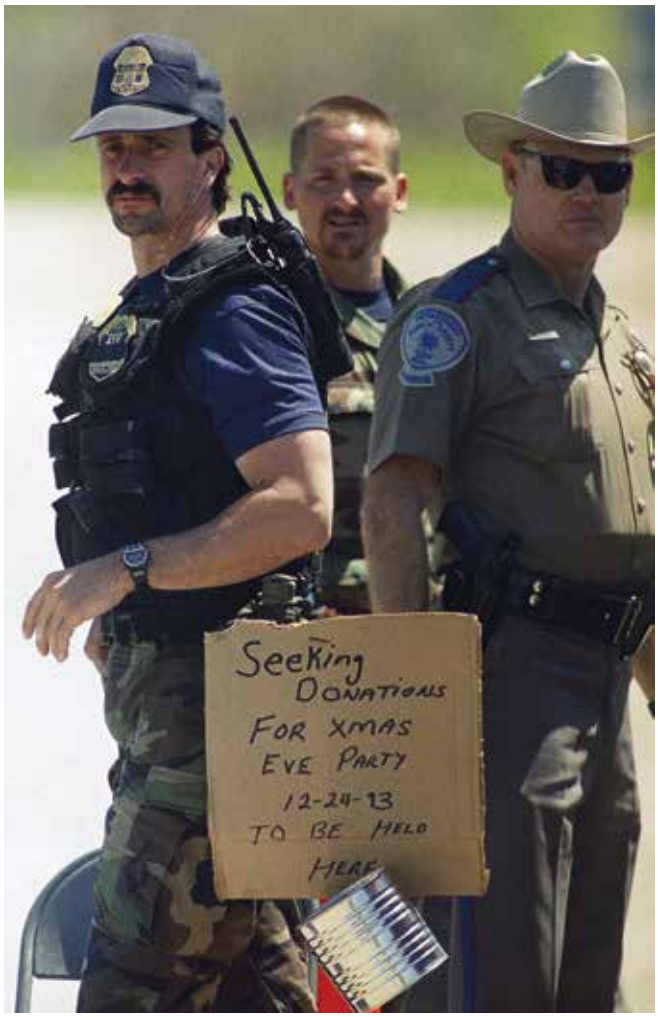
Nevertheless, the ATF used this dubious allegation that a lab for making methamphetamines had been present on the property to obtain helicopters to help in the raid. Apparently, there was no drug manufacturing going on at Mt. Carmel.

The February 28 ATF Raid

It is thought that one impetus for a dramatic raid was to help secure better funding for ATF. Even Ricks told me that the ATF desired a "spectacular effect" with its raid.

They certainly got that. Unfortunately, they also needlessly caused the deaths of both ATF agents and Branch Davidians. That result was almost a foregone conclusion, for as Agent Bill Buford said, agents were authorized to shoot anyone inside armed with a weapon when they launched their February 28 assault. And, several witnesses later testified that there was never any announcement that the raiders were law enforcement. One Davidian later said he thought it might be "some kind of anti-Christian group" making the assault.

Indeed, between 75 and 90 agents rushed toward the compound, screaming like Marines storming a beach. Agent Roland Ballesteros made his way toward the front door, which was now open. He recognized Koresh standing in the doorway, along with two others. Koresh was unarmed, and Ballesteros, with his shotgun pointed at him, shouted, "Police! Search warrant! Lay down!" Others were shouting similar commands.



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They started it: Agents of the ATF staged the initial raid of the Branch Davidian compound. After the raid quickly turned into a disaster, with 10 deaths, the ATF gave control of the siege to the FBI. Then the FBI staged the final raid on April 19, 1993, in which 75 people in the compound were killed.

Another agent, Joseph Patterson, said he saw nothing in Koresh's hands and did not consider him a threat. Patterson pointed a pistol at Koresh "in an attempt to get him to comply." As Ballesteros came closer, he said that Koresh asked, "What's going on?" before shutting the door. Agents said the first shots came through the closed door, although the ATF had already killed five dogs (pets of the children) at the beginning of the raid.

Koresh told David French of CNN, "I opened the door as they were running up.… They were in complete combat uniform, and they started hollering, you know. All of them hollered, I didn't know what they were saying." He insisted to CNN, "They started firing at me and so what happened was is that I fell back in the door and the bullets started coming through the door."

At this, Koresh said some of the Davidians started firing back, while he was shouting, "Go away, there's women and children here, let's talk." It is doubtful that the agents could understand Koresh any better than he could understand them, but the ATF already knew that women and children were inside the building they were shooting at.

Of course, the front doors could have provided evidence as to whether bullets all came from inside, or all from outside, or both, but during the later FBI final siege on April 19, an armored vehicle dragged the doors away from the building. When the Texas Rangers later took custody of the property from the FBI and the ATF, only the left front door could be found. Though the left door showed no smoke damage, Dick Reavis wrote in *The Ashes of Waco*, "Ranger and ATF agents were only able to surmise that somehow, the missing steel door had 'melted' during the blaze. Yet other metal items inside — guns, cartridges, tricycles, cans of food, and kitchenware — and some items of glass survived the inferno."

Despite knowledge of the presence of children, Agent Lowell Sprague later admitted, he fired at what he considered "threats," which included a pair of hands in a window, and even curtains moving. As Moore wrote in *The Davidian Massacre*, "Texas Rangers testified that BATF agents in the undercover house three-hundred yards south of Mount Carmel were firing at the building. Rangers collected more than seventy used shell casings from in and around the undercover house."

By the time the failed ATF assault of February 28 had ended, 10 people were dead — six Davidians and four ATF agents. Others were wounded in the battle, including Koresh.

The FBI Siege Begins

That evening, the ATF agreed to relinquish control of the siege to the FBI. At first, it appeared that the bureau's agents would be able to coax Koresh and his followers to quickly surrender. As a condition to giving up, Koresh asked for the FBI to first play an audiotape he had made, in prime-time, on radio stations across the country. The FBI agreed, but then only played the tape on local stations in the middle of the afternoon. Koresh cited what he considered a breach of promise as his excuse not to surrender on March 2.

At this, the FBI began to take actions to make the Davidians so uncomfortable that they would come out of the compound. They cut off phone contact, except with them. They turned the electricity on and off. A few Davidians did surrender, but most did not, and on March 12, the FBI cut off their electricity for good. Next, they began shining bright lights at the Davidians' windows, night and day (which, as it turned out, helped the Davidians read at night when their electric lights no longer worked), and used loudspeakers to blare sounds of screeching rabbits being slaughtered, along with several other sounds, such as clocks ticking. They even played Nancy Sinatra's song, "These Boots Are Made for Walking," with its famous line, "they're going to walk all over you," over and over.

FBI spokesman Bob Ricks said, "The music … has been specifically selected for its irritation ability." During the siege, which continued for almost two months, the FBI depicted Koresh as a cult leader with very unusual ideas about biblical prophecy. While irrelevant, this was intended to win over public opinion for the FBI.

AP Images

Lying to avoid legalities? Texas National Guard tanks were deployed to the Davidian compound. Legal justification to use armored vehicles against civilians was obtained under the "war on drugs" by claims that Koresh was manufacturing drugs. These claims were never proven.

When I raised the issue of whether the FBI's final assault upon the Davidians was necessary, Ricks became very testy. He asked me what I would have done, then argued that Koresh was about to start killing the children inside of the compound.

When I asked how he knew what Koresh was about to do, Ricks told me that "psychologists" had come to that conclusion, based on an analysis of his writings and statements during the siege. However, in the book *Ashes of Waco*, Ricks is quoted as saying, "There is nobody who can understand what this man [Koresh] is saying."

Whatever Koresh's intentions were, the compound did not become a raging fireball until after Attorney General Janet Reno ordered the final assault on April 19, 1993. Large quantities of tear gas were pumped into the buildings that housed the defiant Branch Davidians.

CS gas is the common name for 2-chlorobenzalmalonitrile, a white powder. More than one hundred nations, including the United States, had banned the use of CS gas during wartime; however, no restrictions on its use on a nation's own citizens existed. Still, the FBI should have known the dangers: The manufacturers of CS gas warn against its use indoors because heavy exposures have caused deaths. Ricks adamantly denied to me the lethal effects of CS gas, but finally conceded that it was "possible" to kill a person if "you just drowned them in it."

If the purpose of putting gas into the buildings was to force the evacuation of the buildings, it was an ill-advised method. The section of the *U.S. Army Field Manual* on civil disturbances states that persons are generally "incapable of executing organized and concerted actions" while under the influence of CS gas. The manual even asserts that "excessive exposure to CS may make them incapable of vacating the area."

Worse, the FBI inserted the CS gas using flame-inducing gas grenades. After six years of denials that it used pyrotechnic devices (which can precipitate fires) on the Davidian compound, the FBI reluctantly admitted in 1999 that such devices had been used. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, a 40 mm incendiary grenade was used "that releases tear gas with a burning explosive capable of sparking fires."

AP Images

For the children? President Bill Clinton and his attorney general, Janet Reno, were still new to their positions when the ATF conducted its initial assault on February 28, 1993. Reno eventually authorized the use of CS gas on the Branch Davidians, despite the presence of children inside the compound. Ironically, concern over the welfare of the children was used to justify the February raid.

Though for more than six years, the FBI insisted that nothing it did could have caused the fatal blaze that engulfed Mt. Carmel, it was lying. In his interview with me in 1999, Ricks adamantly still held to the story that the Davidians had started the fire themselves. The FBI had managed to get multiple listening devices in the compound, and there are audio tapes wherein it sounds as if some Davidians are planning to start fires during the assault. Whether those fires would be for warmth, defense, or suicide, we don't know for sure. While Ricks was a top assistant of the FBI agent in charge during the Waco siege, he told me that he was "not aware" that pyrotechnic devices were used to deliver CS gas. Even though he was "not aware" of the use of pyrotechnic devices (which could have certainly started a fire when mixed with CS gas), he insisted in our interview that the pyrotechnic devices of which he was "not aware" did not start a fire. He insisted that he was confident that the pyrotechnic devices of which he was "not aware" were not fired at any part of the compound where the fires erupted. Instead, Ricks supported the FBI contention that the tear gas grenades (which the FBI had lied about for over six years) bounced harmlessly off a concrete structure without causing any significant damage.

The Final Assault

The final assault added to the carnage: In *The Ashes of Waco*, Dick Reavis wrote, "Surviving residents say that in making their entries, the tanks knocked over lanterns and cans of fuel, and crushed pressurized tanks filled with liquefied propane gas, a volatile heating and cooking fuel."

Respected British journalist Ambrose Evans-Pritchard wrote in his book *The Secret Life of Bill Clinton*, "Infants too young to use masks were subjected to six hours' exposure to CS gas." Many experts contend that some of the babies could have died from the gas alone, even without the fire.

"It is my contention that every salient fact put forward by the Clinton Administration about Waco is a lie. I do not believe that the Branch Davidians were stockpiling weapons for offensive action, or any action," Evans-Pritchard wrote. When some of the Davidians were later put on trial, jury foreman Sarah Bain said, "The federal government was absolutely out of control here. We spoke in the jury room about the fact that the wrong people were on trial, that it should have been the ones who planned the raid and orchestrated it and insisted on carrying out this plan who should have been on trial."

Evans-Pritchard contends that it is likely that the flammable residue from the CS gas was ignited by accident, perhaps by a tank smashing into a fuel lantern during the final assault on April 19, 1993 (when the Davidians' electricity was cut off, they resorted to using lanterns). Another possibility, Evans-Pritchard offered, was that the flash-bang grenades or other explosives used by the FBI precipitated the fire.

The use of tanks in the final assault has raised other questions. It is illegal, without a presidential waiver, to use any part of the army to execute the laws. On an Oklahoma City radio station (KTOK), Ricks denied to host Mike McCarville that there were any Delta Force military "operatives" present at Mt. Carmel. Ricks explained that they were only there as observers, in case the FBI needed their assistance.

Of course, the official position of the U.S. government was that the Davidians had set the fire themselves. Before the final assault on April 19, Ricks told reporters that the FBI was confident that the Davidians would not commit mass suicide, but after the inferno engulfed Mt. Carmel that afternoon, he shouted, "Oh, my God, they're killing themselves!" In *The Davidian Massacre*, Carol Moore commented, "As if only a Davidian mass suicide could explain the fire."

Reactions to the Waco Tragedy

Last fall, my wife and I visited the Davidian compound, a few miles outside Waco, Texas, where some members of the religious sect still live. The gate was open, and we drove a short distance inside to where a monument had been erected in honor of the Branch Davidians who died there. It is a simple memorial, mostly just listing the names of the slain. I was struck by the large number of children who died in the fire, as they had inscribed their ages along with their names.

It saddened me that this could happen in my country. At the time, many Americans were enraged, and directed their anger at the Clinton administration, including At-

AP Images

Proud of the carnage? Almost as though it were a military victory against a foreign enemy, the flags of the United States, the state of Texas, and the ATF were raised over the burned-out ruins of Mount Carmel. The actions of the Clinton administration were cited by Timothy McVeigh for his murderous role in the deadly act of domestic terrorism two years later, when he and "others unknown" blew up the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

torney General Janet Reno. It is likely that the tragedy contributed to the Republicans taking control of both houses of Congress the next November.

Unfortunately, some saw the tragic events at Waco, from February 28 to April 19, 1993, as something that called for a violent reaction against the federal government in general. Federal prosecutors alleged during the trial of Timothy McVeigh that he was motivated to bomb the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building because of his anger over the Waco incident. Considering Ricks' connection to the Waco episode, this raises some interesting points. By the time of the Murrah bombing in 1995, Ricks was the lead agent in Oklahoma City for the FBI. Ricks was the very public spokesman for the FBI at Waco, the agent repeatedly seen on television.

When the Murrah Federal Building was destroyed on April 19, 1995, two years to the day after the Branch Davidian fire, the FBI's office, led by Ricks at the time, was located at 50 Penn Place — six miles from the bombing. That office was quickly cleared. In my interview with him, Ricks declined to speculate as to whether he believed McVeigh targeted a federal building in Oklahoma specifically because of Ricks' role at Waco.

Since it is widely assumed that the Oklahoma City Bombing was intended to avenge Waco, I asked Ricks what lessons we could learn from the Waco debacle so as to prevent retaliations such as the Murrah building bombing. He didn't think anything could be learned. When I suggested that perhaps the ATF gloating over its assault by raising the ATF flag over the rubble of the Waco complex could have been the final straw that would send an irrational person such as McVeigh over the edge, Ricks sharply rejected that theory. He told me that McVeigh was "bound to blow up something," regardless of what was done at Waco.

In fact, Ricks expressed empathy for those who mounted the flag because they had been "shot at" during the initial ATF raid. He then asked me if I had ever been "shot at" during a battle, adding quickly that he had been "shot at."

After the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building on April 19, 1995, the FBI agent in charge of its investigation was Bob Ricks.

Moore concluded *The Davidian Massacre* by calling for a special independent counsel to investigate what she called "the crimes against the Branch Davidians by BATF and FBI agents and officials." Sadly, McVeigh's evil actions in April 1995 not only killed scores of innocent Americans, they also killed any chance of the investigation happening. After the Murrah bombing, some took the warped view that McVeigh's actions, two years later, had somehow justified the government's actions at Waco.

Although Congress never did an investigation of the Waco tragedy of a quarter century ago, it is an event that we should never forget. We should remember the next time a high-ranking government official spouts the official explanation for some tragic event in which the government was directly involved that this same government was anything but honest, forthright, and unsullied in its activities at Waco, and after. ■

Carjacked the Wrong Guy

ABC News reported on February 28 about a Wisconsin man who successfully stopped a carjacker from stealing his car. The incident occurred in the parking lot of the company where the man is employed as a machinist. Milwaukee Machine Tool Corp. is located in a high-crime section of the city and, as a result, its employees are typically prepared to defend themselves if necessary. The Machine Tool worker involved in the ordeal had a concealed-carry permit, and he used his gun to fatally shoot the suspect. Witnesses say the employee had just pulled into the parking lot and was parking his car when a silver SUV pulled right up behind him and the suspect leapt out of the passenger side of the SUV armed with a gun and ran up to the employee's car. The employee quickly pulled out his own gun and fired at the carjacker, fatally injuring him. Once the driver of the SUV heard the shots, he quickly drove away, leaving his mortally wounded partner in crime to die lying in the parking lot.

Co-worker Gabriel Alwin witnessed the whole thing and told Fox6 that, at the time of the shooting, it was "pitch dark." Alwin also said that carjacking is a frequent occurrence in the area, and employees are always prepared for such a crime. "You gotta watch for carjackers…. It's a war zone, so you're used to carjackers. You're used to murderers. You gotta watch out for stuff like that. If not you're a victim — I'm not trying to be a victim." Alwin also said that most of the company's employees carry concealed and try to be ready for criminals. "I think everybody around here pretty much carries. We got guys that carry here and I've told them when we pull in here and we're waiting, put it right on your lap. Put it on your lap and we face the gate. We back in so our fronts are facing the gate open. Everything is conscious of what's going on in this area," Alwin said.

Dean Hazen of Urbana, Illinois, is a retired police officer who now prepares people for having a concealed-carry permit. Hazen told ABC News that while gun owners should be prepared to defend themselves, they should always try to avoid taking a life if possible. "It's a terrible thing, the worst thing you can possibly do in your life with never-ending consequences…. The intent is never to kill anybody. The intent is to stop the threat. Whether they live or die is not up to you."

Authorities say the investigation is ongoing, and the worker is fully cooperating.

Man With AR-15 Stops Violent Attack

The AR-15 has been in the news a lot lately as the anti-gun, left-wing media has continued to treat it as a threat to public safety and are working relentlessly to smear any AR-15 owner as a potential mass shooter. But a story out of Oswego Township, Illinois, showed us there are indeed AR-15 owners out there who have good intentions and that the AR-15 can be used as a non-violent deterrent. Patch.com reported on February 27 about a man who used an AR-15 to stop a violent attack without even firing the weapon. Police say a domestic dispute between two neighbors in an apartment complex escalated into a knife attack where one neighbor repeatedly stabbed another neighbor. The entire violent stabbing was witnessed by a third man named Dave Thomas. Thomas would later tell police that he saw blood all over the hallway and decided he had to help. Thomas, who teaches a concealed-carry course, ran back to his residence and grabbed his AR-15. Wielding the weapon, Thomas ran back to the scene of the violent attack and pointed his AR-15 at the attacker. Thomas told WGN-TV that he chose the AR-15 because it's a "bigger gun, I think a little more of an intimidation factor. Definitely played a part in him actually stopping." Thomas also told WGN-TV that the attacker stopped once he was staring down the barrel of an AR-15. Thomas said the suspect was a "half a breath away from getting his head blown off and he knew that…. That's why he put the knife down." Thomas ordered the suspect to stop the violent attack and then held him at gunpoint until law enforcement arrived.

Thomas explained to WGN-TV that he prefers the AR-15 for multiple reasons: "The AR-15 is my weapon of choice for home protection…. It's light, it's maneuverable. If you train and know how to use it properly, it's not dangerous. And this is just a perfect example of good guy with an AR-15 stopped a bad guy with a knife. And there were no lives taken, so all in all it was a good day."

Indeed, this is not the only example of an AR-15 being successfully used as a defensive weapon. Scott Morefield wrote an article on Townhall.com on February 26 about multiple examples of when the AR-15 was used to save lives and defend innocent victims from their violent attackers. Morefield concluded his piece with the following astute observation about how the anti-gun mainstream media's attempt to demonize AR-15 owners is completely out of touch with the reality. "If, as even the most rabid gun control proponent would admit when pressed, the vast majority of America's approximately 15 million AR-15 owners would use their weapons for self-defense rather than for unlawful purposes, what justification can possibly [be] made for disarming these people in an effort to try to disarm criminals who wouldn't follow the law anyway? In the end there's no logical justification, only empty rhetoric."

Off-duty Cop Ends Gas Station Robbery

AM New York reported on March 6 that an armed robbery was stopped by the brave actions of an off-duty police officer. Two armed men tried to rob a gas station in Brooklyn, but an off-duty cop witnessed the hold-up inside the gas-station booth. The officer walked up to the booth, pulled out his own gun, and aimed it at both suspects. The cop yelled to the suspects to stop and identified himself as a police officer. Instead of complying with the officer's lawful orders, the two suspects turned their weapons toward the cop. The officer's training kicked in, and he fired at the suspects, hitting one of the men in the torso. The other suspect ran from the scene, leaving his injured accomplice behind. The wounded suspect was transported to a nearby medical facility, where he later died owing to the severity of his wound. The investigation is ongoing. ■

— Patrick Krey

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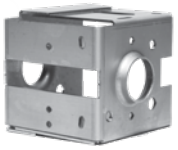

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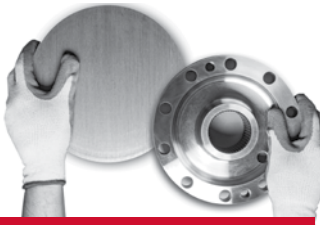

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The Perilous Push for Universal Basic Income

Item: *"Today, 48 percent of Americans support it [universal basic income], according to a new Northeastern University/Gallup survey of more than 3,000 U.S. adults," reported CNBC on February 26.*

As CNBC's reporter Anna Nova noted: "Proposals for universal basic income programs vary, but the most common one is a system in which the federal government sends out regular checks to everyone, regardless of their earnings or employment."

CNBC quoted Guy Standing, co-founder of the Basic Income Earth Network, who spoke on the subject at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland:

> *"The claim is often made that if you give people a basic income, they'll become lazy and stop doing work," Standing said. "It's an insult to the human condition. Basic incomes tend to increase people's work rather than reduce it."*
>
> *That's because research has shown that a basic income can improve people's mental and physical health, Standing said, as well as encourage them to pursue employment for reasons more meaningful than just a need to put food on the table.*

The piece also pointed out that the notion "of universal basic income is more popular with certain groups. For example, 65 percent of Democrats want to see a universal basic income and 54 percent of people between the ages of 18 and 35 do. In comparison, just 28 percent of Republicans support universal basic income."

Item: *An article carried by Salon.com for March 3, which first appeared on AlterNet (a progressive news magazine and a project of the non-profit Independent Media Institute), recalled that Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook, "during his 2017 commencement speech at Harvard, optimistically called UBI a 'cushion' that would enable everyone to try new ideas that could change the world."*

AlterNet's Valerie Vande Panne also wrote, "Everyone will potentially get a piece of the poverty pie regardless of income. Call it 'luxury communism' and embrace it!"

"And so, many of the richest men in the world — who are inevitably rich because they are skilled at concentrating wealth into their own hands — are telling the public UBI could ensure dignity and self-esteem."

"They're also saying it's inevitable. Global business leaders Richard Branson and Elon Musk say a UBI will become a necessity as tech replaces jobs."

Ismailciydem/E+/Getty Images Plus

Again, there just aren't enough rich people: At present if the U.S. government taxed away every cent in income above $100,000, taxed away all profits from Fortune 500 companies, and eliminated foreign aid, it still couldn't pay its bills — let alone pay for a Universal Basic Income.

Correction: It seems that we have heard this type of siren song before. Here's the come-on this time: Let's just have the government give everybody handouts. But of course, there is no free money.

The promised land is enticing, as it was in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, which also held out illusory visions of infinite happiness. What was delivered was decidedly different.

The problem occurs with the actual results. As French political economist and philosopher Bertrand de Jouvenel put it: "There is a tyranny in the womb of every utopia." This is not to suggest that all-embracing Silicon Valley despotism is nigh, but rather to warn that there are ambitious fantasists who would remake the world and have goals that are not readily apparent or could be hijacked by those with toxic aims.

Prominent technology leaders are offering salvation from unemployment via further bloating the welfare state with dollars wrenched from taxpayers. The solution, we are led to believe, is for guaranteed checks to be bestowed on everyone.

Consider a recent piece carried in Recode (a California-based technology news website). The March 8 article pointed out that days earlier, UBI "officially became part of California's Democratic Party platform, signaling that the idea is beginning to enter the political mainstream at the same time Silicon Valley leaders are putting their weight behind it." This is how the plan was described:

> Universal Basic Income is the idea that all citizens should receive a certain amount of money from the government, with no regulations on spending attached. In recent years, tech leaders have funded major projects in the space: Y Combinator Research piloted a program in Oakland that gave people $1,500 a month for a year, and Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes [is funding a project in Stockton, California].

The backing of private pilot programs is

one matter. But that is not the ultimate goal. Eventually, the government would take over the plan. California, as one might imagine, is a key breeding ground for such designs. And universal basic income is already being implemented overseas by governments. The *Los Angeles Times* summarized some of these programs last June:

> San Francisco's Office of Financial Empowerment is "exploring" whether to launch a demonstration program, according to its director, Sean Kline. So far, the city has joined in a $100-million grant proposal to the MacArthur Foundation and started planning for a conference of UBI experts this fall.
>
> Other programs are further along. Finland this year launched a three-year test providing monthly checks worth 560 euros, or about $625, to 2,000 unemployed workers aged 25 to 58. They'll give up their existing government benefits in return, but will still receive the checks if they get jobs. The Dutch city of Utrecht has started a two-year pilot plan awarding 250 residents the equivalent of about $1,100 a month. The Canadian province of Ontario is about to launch a project giving 4,000 randomly chosen residents in three cities the equivalent of $13,000 U.S. annually.

The scheme has attractions for many. *Dissent* magazine noted last spring that UBI had just been endorsed by the Movement for Black Lives as part of a reparations program. Meanwhile, Canada's Leap Manifesto called for its consideration on the grounds of environmental sustainability. Jeremy Corbyn said that the Labour Party would investigate the prospects for basic income in the U.K., and experiments in Scotland have been backed by the left-wing SNP. When Benoît Hamon won the Socialist Party presidential nomination in France, the party's platform included a basic income.

There are UBI proponents (and detractors) with markedly opposing political and philosophical views. The above *Dissent* account pointed out that UBI "has the potential to act as a Trojan horse for the left or right: left critics fret that it will serve as a vehicle for dissolving the remains of the welfare state, while proponents herald it as the 'capitalist road to communism.'"

Some libertarians in the United States, aghast at the current welfare system, have been open (at least in theory) to replacing that tangled quagmire with a simpler solution. The current situation assuredly fits the definition of a "hot mess." Below is an official graphic from the House Ways and Means Committee (in 2015) that depicts anti-poverty programs, which don't work but never die.

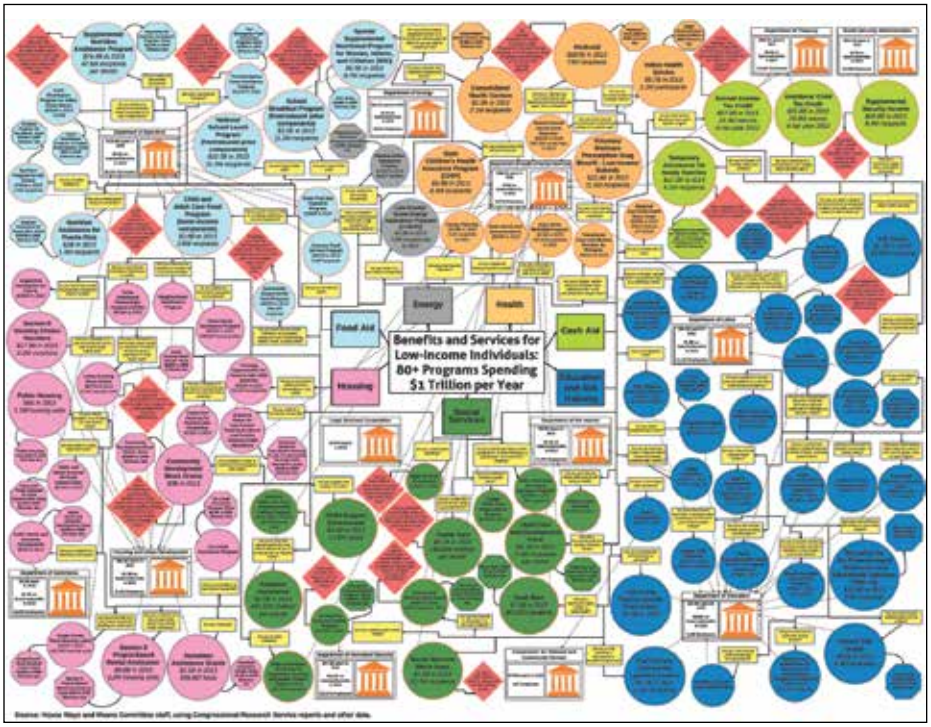
Mike Tanner, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, was on target in his description last summer of the failures of these bureaucracies, noting that the federal government was then funding

> more than 100 separate anti-poverty programs, at an annual cost of nearly $700 billion per year. State and local governments spend another $300 billion per year on anti-poverty programs. Yet, despite this roughly $1 trillion investment, poverty rates (even using more accurate alternative measures) have not significantly improved since the 1970s, and economic mobility among the poor remains stagnant.

However, Tanner has also suggested that we should consider replacing the existing convoluted welfare state with a UBI. Though such a contention might count as a hypothetical debater's point, in truth the scheme is likely as castles in the sky. Each of these existing programs has backers with vested interests who would fight tooth and nail to keep their beneficiaries on the dole.

Here's the more likely outcome in today's world of "entitlements" should a national UBI be initiated: It would be added to the futile, expensive patchwork of schemes already in place.

Even setting common sense aside for the sake of argument, such notions have



And yet they fail: A chart by the House Ways and Means Committee shows the myriad welfare agencies of the federal government. *https://waysandmeans.house.gov/chairman-boustany-better-coordinating-welfare-programs-to-serve-families-in-need/*

a poor track record. Writing in the *Daily Signal* in February, the Heritage Foundation's Mimi Teixeira observed:

> In the 1970s, the government ran four random control experiments across six states to try the negative income tax, a similar policy proposal that was popular at the time. In each test, the work disincentive effect was disastrous. For every $1,000 in added benefits to a family, there was an average reduction in $660 of wages from work.
>
> There are many reasons universal basic income proposals fail. The policy tends to direct resources to people who do not need them, while increasing dependency and decreasing work across the truly needy population.
>
> The most apparent flaw in the universal basic income proposal is the lack of work requirements. Work requirements are important because they help those in poverty achieve self-sufficiency. Additionally, a vast majority of Americans believe that people should be required to work in exchange for benefits.

Having the government handing out money to all might sound superficially attractive — but it becomes foolhardy with just a bit of analysis. Indeed, the idea was too much to swallow for *New York Times'* economic columnist Eduardo Porter.

Porter simply could not make the arithmetic work. He cited Robert Greenstein of the left-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, who had taken out his calculator and discovered that writing a check of $10,000 to 300 million or so Americans would cost more than $3 trillion annually. "Where would all of that funding come from?" he asked rhetorically in May 2016.

> It amounts to nearly all the tax revenue collected by the federal government.... Cut it by half to $5,000? That wouldn't even clear the poverty line. And it would still cost as much as the entire federal budget except for Social Security, Medicare, defense and interest payments.

AP Images

Failed philosophy: Proponents of a universal basic income believe that if we just give everyone money, whether they work or not, more unemployed people will begin working. But government studies from the 1970s showed that more free money meant less work.

Even those willing to be convinced find themselves doubting about the expense of establishing a universal basic income. Vanessa Brown Calder, an expert in the field, commented in the *Cayman Financial Review* in April of 2017 that the UBI figures did not seem "very feasible — at least not without large tax increases." She cited calculations made by Cato's aforementioned Michael Tanner. Those statistics revealed that if the federal government

> provided just $12,316 for every individual in the United States, or enough to bring them to the non-elderly federal poverty line, the cost of UBI in the U.S. would be nearly $4.4 trillion, more than the entire U.S. federal budget. In his paper on the topic, he notes that "even if the guaranteed national income replaced every existing anti-poverty program, we would still be some $3.4 trillion short." In order to make ends meet in this scenario, the tax liabilities of high-income individuals would likely be substantially impacted.

This massive expense would likely mean that UBI would just be limited to low-income individuals, she noted. But, at that point, that would leave "UBI looking a lot less 'universal' and a lot more like your average cash transfer welfare program," said Brown. Even beyond the direct outlays, she wrote,

> providing every U.S. citizen with a cash grant is likely to have a large and negative behavioral effect. Economists agree that welfare programs create labor supply disincentives, meaning that individuals reduce work because of government benefits.

If you want less of something, tax it; if you want more of something, subsidize it. That tendency will not change until the laws governing human behavior are repealed. And if you want to recompense people regardless of their effort, you will be likely to get more indolent people — regardless of the alleged high-minded wishes of some proponents of universal basic income.

So what really would happen if, in the name of eliminating inequality, the state were to become the guarantor of all "basic needs" for everyone? Who would actually be empowered in such a case? One could argue over who would be the ultimate winner. However, it stretches credulity to the limit to think that the victor would be individual liberty. ■

— William P. Hoar

BY WILLIAM F. JASPER

Terrified of Tariffs?

To judge from the impassioned cries of his opponents, one might think President Donald Trump's tariff announcement on March 1 was the opening shot of a calamitous "trade war" that will end in apocalypse and ashes. Imposing a tariff of 25 percent on foreign-made steel and 10 percent on imported aluminum is apparently, in some minds, more barbaric and heartless than destroying Iraq, militarily occupying Afghanistan for the past 17 years (and on into infinity), bombing Syria into oblivion, overthrowing governments in Egypt and Libya, launching drone and missile attacks against other countries, etc.

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In fact, some of the hand-wringers who fret that Trump's tariffs will end in a trade war don't seem to have much problem at all getting behind perpetual shooting wars in all corners of the globe. They fuss over China's retaliation against U.S.-grown sorghum or the prospect that Europe may retaliate with tariffs on U.S.-made peanut butter, orange juice, and Harley Davidsons. But many of the same don't appear to find a military war with North Korea — including retaliation with nuclear missiles — particularly concerning. They're filled with angst over projected tariff costs — running into tens or hundreds of billions of dollars — presented in worst-case-scenario fantasies by tariff critics, while at the same time unflinchingly, reflexively voting for massive new outlays for our far-flung, never-ending, and undefined War on Terror that has already consumed trillions of American dollars, not to mention the lives of thousands of American servicemen and well over one million foreign civilian casualties. We have already sunk $5.6 trillion into our War on Terror ventures in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Syria. Those costs also do not include the additional huge sums involved in the additional 70-plus countries where our ever-expanding War on Terror has operations of one kind or another ongoing.

Globalists of the Democrat-Republican duopoly in Washington, D.C., are in a dither over Trump's tariff moves. Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham, two of the GOP's most rabid "Never Trump" war hawks, go completely weak at the knees at the thought of tariffs and "trade wars." McCain, who is ever ready to "let slip the dogs of war" at a moment's notice, ripped the Trump tariffs, warning they "will harm the American economy, hurt American workers, and damage relations with America's allies and partners." His Mini-Me clone, Graham, who has been impatiently beating the war drums against Iran and North Korea, is distraught at the thought of tariffs.

"Please reconsider," he pleaded with the president, calling the tariff announcement "a huge mistake." Patrick Buchanan notes, "Twenty-four hours earlier, Graham had confidently assured us that war with a nuclear-armed North Korea is 'worth it.'"

"All the damage that would come from a war [with North Korea] would be worth it in terms of long-term stability and national security," said Graham. Buchanan aptly comments: "A steel tariff terrifies Graham. A new Korean war does not?"

Across the aisle, California Democrat Senator Dianne Feinstein has supported virtually every U.S. shooting, bombing, killing war across the planet — from Bosnia and Kosovo to Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. But the horrors of a "trade war" curdle her blood. Feinstein, a certified one-worlder (she's a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and was an early member of the Trilateral Commission), issued a statement on March 8 charging that "President Trump's decision to impose steel and aluminum tariffs risks a global trade war."

Senators McCain, Graham, Feinstein, and other bipartisan pom-pom girls for so-called free trade can be depended on not only to waste precious American blood, treasure, and goodwill on endless wars, but also to view tariffs as the equivalent of the bubonic plague. Tariffs, they aver, will devastate our economy, yet they favor sovereignty-destroying agreements such as NAFTA, TPP, and TTIP that demolish our manufacturing and technology bases, make us dependent on our enemies for critical materials, and subject us to the jurisdiction of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. In truth, the "free trade" lobby has been engaged in a real trade war against America since the end of World War II. In 1945, we had an average tariff rate of 10.6 percent. That has steadily decreased to less than two percent. However, as the U.S. Trade Representative website notes, "One-half of all industrial goods entering the United States enter duty free" — which means with zero tariffs.

The politicians and economic "experts" who are expressing horror at the thought of tariffs are also fighting the Trump administration's efforts to roll back the federal regulatory state that is waging war on our businesses and making it impossible for them to compete globally. President Trump is making sincere efforts to slash the job-killing regulations that cost our economy $1.9 trillion annually. Those who would avoid the "tariff wars" would do well to enlist on Trump's side in the regulatory war. ■

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